
00097610

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 March, 2016

REVELATIONS

OF

THE DEAD-ALIVE.

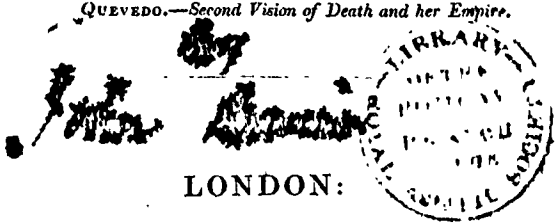
" Eyes shall commune with the Dead-Alive."

White Lady.

" Counterfeit? I lie; I am no counterfeit;—to counterfeit dying, when a man thereby liveth, is to be no counterfeit, but the true and perfect image of life indeed."—*Jack Falstaff.*

" 'In what year of the Lord are we?' said the necromancer."

QUEVEDO.—*Second Vision of Death and her Empire.*



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR W. SIMPKIN AND R. MARSHALL,

STATIONERS'-HALL COURT, LUDGATE STREET.

1824.

Gnd
B3·07
Rev/Rev
97610

J. M'Creery, Tooks Court,
Chancery Lane, London.



REVELATIONS

OF

THE DEAD ALIVE.

CHAPTER I.

" Such a glimpse as prophet's eye
Gains on thy depths, futurity!"

SCOTT.

DOCTOR CHEYNE has long ago made known to the world that some favored individuals can, to all appearance, die whenever they think fit, and having remained a considerable time as a corse, come to life again. He instances a case of a patient of his own who possessed this rare power of disposing of himself; nor does the story rest on Doctor Cheyne's single testimony, for the names of two of his cotemporaries, Skrine and Baynard, are given as joint witnesses of its truth. Doctor John Reid, in his "Essays on Hypochondriasis and other nervous

affections," recognises that extraordinary narrative; quotes it, nay even advances it as illustrative of the mastery of volition over the mechanical acts of the body. The author of the following important tract, also begs leave to submit to the attention of the reader, Doctor Skrine's anecdote; the words are truly as follows:

"He (the patient) could die when he pleased, and yet, by an effort, or somehow, he could come to life again. He insisted so much upon our seeing the trial made, that we were forced to comply. We all three felt his pulse; first, it was distinct, though small and thready, and his heart had its usual beating. He composed himself on his back, and lay in a still posture for some time; while I held his right hand, Dr. Baynard laid his hand on his heart, and Mr. Skrine held a clear looking-glass to his mouth. I felt his pulse sink gradually, till at last I could not feel any, by the most exact and nice touch. Dr. Baynard could not feel the least motion in his heart, nor Mr. Skrine perceive the least sort of breath, on the bright mirror he held to his mouth. Then each of us, by turns, examined his arm, heart, and breath, but could

not, by the nicest scrutiny, discover the least symptoms of life in him. We reasoned a long time about this odd appearance, as well as we could; and finding he still continued in that condition, we began to conclude that he had indeed carried the experiment too far; and at last we were satisfied he was actually dead, and were just ready to leave him. By nine o'clock in the morning in autumn, as we were going away, we observed some motion about the body; and upon examination, found his pulse and the motion of his heart gradually returning: he began to breathe gently and speak softly; we were all astonished to the last degree at this unexpected change, and after some further conversation with him, and with ourselves, went away fully satisfied as to all the particulars of this fact, but not able to form any rational scheme how to account for it."

The person of whom these circumstances are credibly related was a near and dear friend of the present writer. Something follows in Dr. Cheyne that is not precisely so true as the part quoted. It is said, the gentleman died in reality very soon after this experiment; but here the good Doctor was purposely deceived

by the patient, who had his own motives for retaining, a little longer than usual, the character of a dead man: and I have rather a strong reason to be sure of his eventual assumption of his animal functions, since it is owing to that accident I now happen to breathe the breath of this life, and exist among men to communicate the wondrous yet veritable relation that shall follow.

Before I engage however in the more important part of this treatise, I own a necessity for entering into a clear account of the rare and mystic attribute, by the exercise of which I have been empowered to write what is to be written.

Like ventriloquism, and other curious gifts, the facility of dying at pleasure depends on a certain construction of bodily machinery. But it differs from, and, at the same time, is above all the rest, in another particular; that is to say, it is hereditary. My relative, whose pretensions have been fully established in the quotation, derived his talent from his father, who had it from his uncle, and it has been as regularly transmitted to me. Many advantages resulted from it in our family. As the great painter

Rembrandt is said to have affected death in order to sell his pictures, and come in for an anticipated immortality, so my father once used this gift to get rid of a troublesome dun: my grandfather, to ease himself of a too eloquent wife; and I was myself able to exercise it, in mere boyhood, to escape a threatened, and indeed undue punishment at the hands of my school-master; and since then it has served me in one or two ways that shall be nameless.

But let me now at once premise, that in my humble person the talent has reached a pitch of excellence never possessed, as I could learn of my own knowledge, by any of my predecessors. I do not say whether or no I inherited the natural power to a greater extent than they did; the probability is plausible; but I shall not insist on it, as I have other very excellent means of accounting for my superiority.

Aware of my attribute, even in childhood, and all through life having had the aids of a liberal education, I determined from the first dawn of reason to cultivate it to the utmost, more especially on the following account. A tradition ran amongst us, that at some remote period, one of our forefathers was blessed, by

means of our hereditary grace, with the yearnings of prophecy; and a maiden aunt had pleasure in speaking of this venerable Swedenborgian, who, she said, one hundred and sixty two years ago, beheld a steam-boat plying between Dover and Calais; saw the migration of bogs in Ireland; the comet of 1811; the mermaid; Liston; the Bonassus; read Waverley; visited the great regenerator, Mr. Wilberforce, at his house at Brompton; had glanced at the field of Waterloo; and was introduced at Longwood, where he took coffee with the ex-emperor, both stripped to their waistcoats, on account of the heat of the weather. These anecdotes were so many profound hints to me; and I listened attentively, and came to my own silent resolves upon them. At school and college I directed to the grand point of enlarging and strengthening my natural materials, every new idea at all available. Indeed my first improvement came independently of human aid. I had heard that my ancient relative just alluded to, owed much to the famous purity of his body, and piety of his mind; and in these respects I immediately imitated him, notwithstanding the early temptations of my mother's

house-maid, a girl of an ensnaring eye—and many others to which, being a man of good presence, I have since been exposed; so that without the agency of mere intellectual preparation, I had my day-break of knowledge, confused and doubtful as it might be, simply in the spirit. And this happened at the grammar-school in the manner now following.

Shunning the observation of my class-fellows during the hour of play, I lay down in a sequestered and silent arbour, with the rays of a spring sun dancing in through the trees, over and around me. I collected my mind as usual, and to the earth soon became dead. Heretofore the soul had lapsed with the body, and my trance had been a blank, but now for the first time, a light, and a sound, and a stir came upon me; a bustling and toiling of a new existence; perceptions in feebleness, and things there to be seen and heard, that I could not hear nor see. I struggled and bent my whole soul to learn and understand, weeping in joy and weakness, in pride and shame: but it passed, although in smilings of promise it passed, and once more I was only alive with the life of this world. But the first moment after awaking,

in which I fully recollected that blessed promise, was the most delightful and touching of my mortal existence; I wept again in human tears, and knelt, boy as I was, in that silent arbour, giving thanks.

From this day I too confidently reckoned on every thing; youth is presumptuous; I now know that I offended, and the consequence was, that for years, silence and a shadow dwelt upon my soul; and while I lay apparently a corse, I was dead to myself also. At length I saw my presumption, and humbly bewailed it, and then promises came again, and over and over I enjoyed them. Still, however, I got no strength nor endurance to comprehend what was shewn and spoken to me; and in this stage of my noviciate, as I may call it, I bethought me of secondary means, of which the use in perfecting natural gifts, is not denied to man. So I thought deeply, and watched myself, and by degrees found out where my human incapacities lay, and studied to remedy them. In the first place, I became sensible that I had not power to counterfeit death longer than about twenty-four hours. At the lapse of that time, from the time I composed myself, I invariably felt an

animal sensation predominant about the region of the stomach: and as it forced me to come to life in exceeding hunger, the cause was obvious. How to counteract, in a degree, this serious obstacle, now became my earnest endeavour. I abstained from heavy and regular meals, taking only the smallest portion that might suffice to baffle nature; and, at the instance of a friend, relinquishing my lawful profession, and addicting myself to poetry, in order to impose a kind of inevitable necessity for abstinence; until, gradually, I could fast four whole days together, and consequently enjoy, during four days, my better life. And in this manner I slowly improved in my perceptions during every trance; things began to arrange themselves, and fall into place and order before me; and when I could die for the four days, I lived, first, a year, then two, then three, and then four years, in the future; so that I learned, that for every day of my trance, I had dominion for a year over the time to come.

How I exercised that dominion, and in what manner or fashion I was in the future, whether actually or spiritually, I am not permitted or competent to declare; but I was in it, not as a

dreamer, or as if it had been a dream; but seeing, and hearing, and understanding, as previously I had seen, heard, and understood, in my past world. Dreams cannot give the certainty of features and words that I accompanied with my mind; nor the certainty of sun and air, and of crowded and joyous existence; nor the truth, in fact. All my own dreams, at least, which I enjoyed independently of this riper knowledge, ever were, and continued to be, snatches and disarrangements, and transformations of time, place, and persons; mist and doubt, as if they had happened in twilight; and then waking mistrust and vexation. In trance, on the contrary, I conversed with individuals as seemingly real as this life could present, and observed events as consistent as fate itself could make them; and this the sequel will shew. But to return to the order of my preface.

After I saw creatures and things for four years to come, my vision again became bounded, discerning nought beyond that span of time; in other words, my utmost command over nature could only coerce her into a privation of four days, when I regularly got life, with the usual sensations of ungovernable hunger. Again I

tried to habituate myself to longer abstinence, but in vain. Speculating on the well-known powers of opium to keep up a suspension of common animal sense, and having been advised to the experiment during some consolatory discourse with a gentleman of a foreign name, and of the Romish persuasion, I had recourse to that drug; but alas, it only served to discompose the serenity in which alone revealings could be imparted, and in which I had gained all my former knowledge. Then I discontinued for a space, my habits of dying, and stretched my intellects with treble force, to combat, to a greater extent, the gross obstinacy of nature in her chief animal yearning.

I sought out and pored over every book, that by possibility could give a hint on the subject. By many I found that human life might be sustained, without food, longer than four days; but this profited me nothing, when the pangs of hunger could not be suppressed beyond that time. To deaden or explode this sensation was my object. I made myself familiar with the anatomy of the stomach, and learning that the friction of its collapsed coats is the immediate cause of extreme hunger, I swallowed the hard-

est or least digestible substances, to try and keep the cavity filled, and so prevent the muscular contact. I was not, however, then aware what a powerful chemical elaboratory the stomach is; I could not conceive that, with almost the despatch of vitriol or aquafortis, it was able to decompose even the most obstinate metallic substances, and in my ignorance, such resources as I have mentioned only caused an unusual pain and uneasiness that incapacitated me from the ordinary operation of dying, or else were attended with very trifling success. Mean time, days, weeks, and years, elapsed, and the daily, weekly, and yearly verification of my internal prophecy, served to stimulate me still more to obtain means for lengthening the duration of my trance, and thereby extending my prospective acquirement.

In the midst of my research, I chanced on Buffon's account of the extreme patience of hunger evinced by the great Boa; this seemed to me a happy light, and I hastened to walk by it. The possession of one of these enormous animals—a good study for such as Mrs. Brunton, in familiar illustration of "Self-Control,"—became my ruling wish; and finding no sure

opportunity of gratifying myself in England,—the indulgence of our national habits allowed at Exeter-Change, tending in my mind to enfeeble or disarrange the primitive machinery of the creature,—I had nothing else for it, but to cross the Atlantic, and seek the monster amongst its own wilds: so this I did, and at imminent risk of my life, succeeded in capturing a full grown Boa; but a comparison of its digestive organs with the human ones, completely put my strong hopes to flight, inasmuch as the utter dissimilarity between both, rendered impossible any sympathy or imitation of function.

Yet though defeated in my preconceived view, it was this very voyage that, almost by chance, supplied me at length with the happy material for success.

In the midst of deserts and savages, I brought to mind, that a certain tribe of Indians, the Otomacs, are represented by Humboldt, as living for months together, on one good meal of a peculiar kind of clay. "We found," he says, "heaps of such balls in their huts, piled up in pyramids of three or four feet high;" so I first directed my inquiries, and, under the guidance of some friendly Kickapoos, (part of the very

tribe, amongst whom the present reclaimed savage, Mr. John Hunter, owns he took a scalp,) my feet afterwards, to the country of the dwellings of the Otomacs, where, for a trifling barter, I obtained abundance of the precious clay; precious and more precious to me in that great wilderness, than if it had again rained the manna of the olden time.

Now in possession of my treasure, for such, by a strong presentiment, I knew it to be, I began to cast about in my thoughts for a fit place and situation to use it. Recollecting the populous haunts of England, I despaired of attaining, in that country, the necessary quiet and sequestration for a trance or death of so many months as I anticipated; I calculated that it contained no solitude or retreat, sufficiently removed from the visitations of man, to screen me during so long a time; and when discovered, apparently a corse, I knew that after a coroner's inquest, I should certainly be buried at once at the expense of the parish, and so an end of me, and of the invaluable lights I was doomed to spread abroad in the world.

I therefore determined on a choice of the deepest recess of some of the primeval forests

around me; and even in such a place, and committing myself to the care of Providence, I entered at once on my daring experiment. I climbed the heights of a giant and matted tree, where no beast of prey might follow, lashed myself to the boughs, and lay down in my leafy cradle; then swallowing my meal of earth, I commanded death, and he obeyed me.

And I was dead one hundred and ninety-eight days and a quarter, and for every day I saw a year of time; so that when I came to life again, I had observed what was and is to be in the lapse of one hundred and ninety-eight years and a quarter; a year for each day.

And this knowledge I have, and now I will impart it, exactly as in circumstance and series it was imparted to me. The manner whereof is as follows.

CHAPTER II.

"Words of a mighty, forgotten tongue."

BARRY CORNWALL.

ALL I saw was in England, and appertained to England. I stood, veritably, on Putney-Bridge, which was now handsomely built of stone, looking out for a stage to carry me to London. Men, women, and children, strangely habited, passed to and fro, who, when I addressed them, looked sulky, or silly, or in jeer, making no answer. In a little time I heard the noise of a stage; and anon the stage drew up, and I observed its unusual shape, color, and construction, and the mad dresses of the passengers. When I inquired of Coachee about a place, the fellow laughed, and winked on all the outside company, who opened upon me an unmasked battery of twenty-four full, dull, staring eyes. He answered, however; and his accent was new to my ear—nay, even his language had difficul-

ties that I did not then know to be the encroachments of time on my native tongue. And here I purposely digress, once for all, to declare, that in my various communications with this future people, I was obliged, while learning their new modes of speech, to lay aside a great many words, phrases, and idioms, at which they only smiled, shrugged their shoulders, or turned a deaf ear; and which indeed, my reflections since have taught me to consider just as worthy of general renunciation. In truth, I cannot well contemplate any thing more unmeaning and absurd, than the variety of unintelligible parts of present language this experience has unveiled to my view. As, for instance,

"How *do* you *do?*"—Shut your eyes, call home your analyzing powers, forget that you had ever heard this sentence before—and what idea does it convey to the mind? *What* do you *do?* would be intelligible, though a barbarous tautology; but HOW-*do*-you-*do*—do what?—Nonsense! The only other idiom of which it reminds me, is "*cock-a-doodle-do*;" so far as sense goes they are equal; but *doodle-do* has the advantage in sound.

The French "How do you carry-yourself!"

intended to express the same polite anxiety, is, if possible, more ridiculous.

"I *found myself*"—in a desart, a forest, here or there, or any where. To find is to discover something which you had never possessed before, or which you had once possessed, and afterwards lost. It can be taken in no other sense. And may I not ask, how a grown man shall pick himself up for the first time, or after a week's absence? This reminds me of the parallel sentence: "*I lost myself in a forest.*" If identity be rather the mind than the matter of a man, he might lose himself in a forest, by being devoured by a wild beast, or having his throat cut by robbers; and in such a case, his body (he) might subtly be said to lose its spirit (itself); but how body and mind shall part by walking together in any given direction, or how *ille* could lose *ipse*, by only turning to the right or to the left—behold a puzzle for Spinosa or Kant!

Again, our neighbours apply their "Je me trouvois" in a still more extraordinary way. A gentleman who has been telling you he made an assignation with a lady, adds, "Je me trouvois" at the place of appointment. Our absurd meaning for the phrase is limited to, "I entered or

visited a place for the first time, or by chance;" but the French gallant knew well the convenient spot; he had reconnoitred it often; yet he says, "he found himself there," as if by the merest accident. How simple! And how surprised he must have been at the novelty of his situation!

I was vexed with an acquaintance the other day, for a mistatement of my motives, which he had made to others. I charged him with the fact, and he attempted to explain. The explanation did not at all satisfy me, and I detected myself muttering through my teeth, "*no matter.*" But it *was* matter. The obvious contradiction between my words and my thoughts instantly struck me as very strange. I had said the opposite of what I felt, and, indeed, intended to say. But the phrase is used, indifferently, to denote what it means, and what it does not mean. "*No matter,*" will serve you for all occasions and characters: for the expression of contrary emotions, and no emotion at all. In the depths of despair, a ruined man will say, "I am done up—no matter." A waiting-maid asks her lady which gown, scarf, or ribbon, she will wear, and the lady answers, no matter. A

gentleman in a crowd accidentally treads on your corn: after his polite apology, you try to simper out, no matter. Another knocks you down in the pit, on a benefit night, and you grin forth, *no matter.* A consummate dissembler, read in all Bacon's rules, listens with devouring ear, though averted eye, to a story, out of which he is extracting the long-hoped-for clue to his purpose; yet he coldly says, *no matter;* and a fat easy fellow, who has never chafed his brain about any one purpose under heaven, hears a rigmarole story, and also says, *no matter.*

"*Let me alone,*" is only used to express a wish that another, or others, would have the goodness not to continue boring or tormenting you; but in this forced application the sentence is significant of no idea; nor, of itself, does it contain any, except a preposterous one. Obviously, it does not make the request intended by the speaker; that is, he does not thereby wish for a solitude; and the sole request that a man can strictly urge by it, is, "*to be let,*" in a particular manner, like a house or farm. If an unsocial or misanthropic cottage or meadow could speak, either might say to its landlord, "let *me* alone;"

that is, apart and distinct from your other cottages or meadows.

"Mr. —— *enjoys* good health," or, "Mr. —— enjoys *bad health.*" Pleasure is *enjoyed;* pain is *suffered;* good health is pleasure; bad health is pain: assuredly, therefore, good health is *enjoyed,* and bad health *suffered.* A stoic, indeed, might affect the assertion in both ways. We know that Seneca, because he had a set part to rehearse before his disciples and posterity, pretended to enjoy his warm bath; and so did Socrates his shower-bath, because he could not help it. But a real, alive alderman, can scarcely be said to enjoy a curtain-lecture, or the gout. There is little probability that he would allow them to be enjoyment. Yet "Alderman Curtis, or Alderman Waithman, enjoys bad health."—What description of bad health? What's the matter with him?—"Gout in the stomach." I don't believe a word of it. I can easily conceive he enjoyed the good things that conferred it: the venison, the turtle, the dessert, the grateful wines, white and red; but an effect is not always so pleasant as a cause. Supposing every thing, however—supposing it possible that a creature with a paunch can be a stoic: here we may rule

that the gout in the stomach is perhaps the only enjoyment that one alderman does not envy another.

A man is said to be "*taken up*" for debt, or treason, or any species of statute crime. *Taken* he may be; but what shall we say of the "*up?*" It is only a chance that his prison-chamber may be *up*, instead of *down;* that is, elevated above the street, on which he was *taken*, instead of being sunk below it. If his crime be murder, or any other of a heinous stamp, he must be content with the lowest dungeon the gaol can afford; and when settled in it, he has certainly been taken *down*, and not *up;* or if the phrase pretend to allude to the place in which he was apprehended, and not to the place in which he was confined, then he could only be taken *up* on the heights of a mountain, in a garret, or (as I once saw it) in the top of a tree. But he may as well have been caught in a cave, or cellar, under ground, or in the bottom of a valley; and here, in recollection of the mountain, garret, or tree, we must in common sense admit, he is taken *down*. Fancy him brought to a lock-up house, and secured in the strong barred room on the first floor, while his guard sits over his

head, on the second floor. One of them would easily say, "he is locked *up*, at last." Where is he locked *up?*—"Down stairs." He is *up*—down! Very intelligible language, isn't it?

"*Sit down*," are plain, good words. The body is lowered by sitting *down*. Indeed, "sit" would, of itself, express all we mean; and it often does. "Sit, cousin Percy." But, "sit *up*." Here is a solecism as ridiculous as ever was committed in language. If "*sit*" possesses alone all the force of "sit *down*," "up" also possesses alone the whole force of "sit up:" so that when we use this precious idiom, we truly and actually say, "Be good enough to *sit* and *stand* at one and the same moment."

A dun's bill is not always the most civil thing in the world; even when the items shall have been worn, eaten, drunk, or sported, in the best possible way to your honor and glory, still it is now and then an unpleasant, and, if intruded too often, an uncivil reminiscence. But suppose you dispute the items; suppose you conscientiously believe you never exhibited in the new suit or chariot, nor by means of the elegant furniture, nor have ever quaffed the sparkling juice, it calls on you to acknowledge and pay.

Suppose the dun puts his bill into court, and you are decreed to satisfy his full demand:—surely the bill, by changing hands and situation, would not change its character; yet, in some instances, it here professes to call itself, a *civil* bill. I doubt your acquiescence to the propriety of the epithet.

And now I have hitched on law, perhaps you know what a law *attachment* is: what it is to have the law fall in love with you. Heaven defend us from so flattering a preference!

In grammar, and even with the authority of Dr. Johnson, we are constrained to admit that ideal single-double, a disjunctive con-junction. Identify, if you can, the act of uniting with the act of disuniting. Subtract two from five, and add two to five, by the selfsame process. Collocate by dispersing, connect a chain by breaking it, or build a house by pulling it down. There is but one *dis*junctive *con*junction in nature or reason—marriage.

We have words and phrases that, by themselves, mean contraries, when opposed to each other, though, in union with other words, they mean the same things. Thus "*in short*—at length," are opposite expressions; yet, "*in*

short, he went to bed," and "at length, he went to bed," propose the same action. *Height* is the very antipodes of *depth;* yet "the height of despair," and "the depth of despair," convey precisely the same notions. In Latin, this absurdity is as striking, though differently managed: instead of two words, essentially opposed, to mean indifferently the one thought, there is a single Latin word (*altitudo*) that means, according to your pleasure, *height* or *depth.* We, too, have some words upon which this unnatural and monstrous duty is imposed: for example, *nervous* implies strength or weakness, no matter which. It fits a Hercules or a weakling, a coward or a Cœur-de-lion, a man whose nerves are like iron bars, or a lady whose *nerves* are the shadow of a split hair. A nervous man would rend a primeval rock from its strata bed; a nervous lady could not pick a thimble off the carpet, and would be buried under the pressure of a straw. Might not the word handsome as well apply to beauty or deformity, a Venus or a Gorgon, indifferently? nay, might we not as reasonably call *roast beef, plum pudding?* One word can hold only one idea. A square-inch box cannot hold two square

inches; a measured pint vessel cannot hold a quart of liquid; or, in fact, one is not two.

To "affect" is, *à la dictionnaire*, to be in earnest, and not to be in earnest. It is to have your tastes, or passions, or feelings, really influenced, or to *pretend* they are. You are actually a creditable pupil of Dr. Kitchener, and you affect a certain mysterious-looking dish at table; or you are only a would-be, and you affect to like it, although you never saw it before, and know no more of its ingredients than you do about those of Jupiter's belts, or Saturn's ring. Again, a real invalid is *affected*, and so is a fat lady mayoress: the one with absolute malady, the other with only an effort at fashionable nerves. Then there are all manner of *affections*: we have *affections* of the heart, of the mind, of the liver, of the great toe, and of the stomach. Some of these are *physical*, some metaphysical, and some sentimental. One is surely at liberty to make them all of one kind or the other; and now only mark the odious liability to mistake and confusion. We might have a young lady suffering under a sentimental affection of the—any thing; any thing, as well as the heart; or Mr. Coleridge might have a

metaphysical sore throat; or her, or his, affection of heart or head, might be presumed curable by a bolus or blister. Fie! *affection* in *love* is, after all, as different a thing from *affection* in *physic*, as *attachment* in love is from *attachment* in *law*.

CHAPTER III.

"As strange unto your town as to your talk."

"Sure these are but imaginary wiles,
And Lapland sorcerers inhabit here."

COMEDY OF ERRORS.

BUT I got on the outside of the stage, and keeping prudent silence, wondered within myself at the changed appearance of the country and villages, as I passed. Where Fulham formerly stood, there was a common; but at the London side, a new town broke on my view. Part of the present Kensington remained, but the additions ran into and made it one with Brompton. As we gained Hyde Park Corner, I looked for the Bronze Colossus; it was not to be seen: a hillock of grass alone marked where it had stood.

"After a hundred years of deliberation," said a dry old gentleman who sat by me, and in reply to a remark, a half shrink, rather, of mine—"the English ladies of 1922 razed to the ground

what the English ladies of 1822 set up against the skies. It was a late vindication of their sex's character." "Pardon me," I replied, only half comprehending how this could have chanced, "but I was never inclined to agree with the objections to the fine nakedness of that fine statue. Much sarcasm and many witty things were squibbed off against it: national decorum was outraged, the critics said, and national modesty assaulted, by the *coup-de-œil*. But I fear there was false taste, or worse affectation in all this; certainly it would prove us the merest simpletons, or else the very best or very worst connoisseurs, inasmuch as the statue had been admired by the whole civilized world, until it fell under the more rigid or discerning eye of our British critics; and, further, had never been known to cause much national depravity. Did the society for suppressing vice prosecute, sir?" I asked. The old gentleman snappishly answered, "no."

"Then," said I, "let us say no more about the abstract question of immorality; and I only remark, that I should think just as well of the virtue that looked on a brass or marble figure without any predominant indulgence of sensual association. It is to be feared, that the modesty

which is foremost to appear alarmed and fidgetty, is not always the true modesty. Moreover, are we to stay away from Somerset House, altogether? I once saw a sleeping Bacchante and other things there, just as naked as this was; for that matter, 'the taking down,' by Rubens, is a sin against maids and matrons; and asking your excuse for the unseemly abruptness of the transition, sir, the two little men who strike the chimes at St. Dunstan's are almost as impudently undressed as any specimen of good sculpture in the world."

"Settle that point your own way, sir," resumed the old gentleman, "I wonder at the flippant criticism of the day we speak of, for another reason. Westmacott performed towards the statue no more than the agency of a brass founder; yet all its supposed faults were laid at his door; and the best of the joke was, that the twopenny trash of the time, egregiously blundering on the identity of the work, failed not to cut it up as if it had grown under the hand of some luckless cotemporary. Every body is at this day aware that the "Achilles," once erected in Hyde Park, was a cast taken from one of the immortal equestrian figures still outside the

pope's palace at Rome; with, indeed, the addition of a shield on the left arm, and an unmeaning mass of drapery and armour at the back, and at the right-hand side. Achilles! did they intend the selection of this new name as a compliment? Achilles was only a prudent, vain, cruel, irritable, and revengeful captain. His myrmidons, and not himself, overthrew his lion-like rival, although he asserted the exclusive honor of dragging the carcase at his chariot-wheels. Nor was he even uniformly prudent: he was dallying with his golden-haired minion in his tent when many an ardent friend fell at the post he should have been foremost in protecting. Pray do you happen to recollect the name of the general in whose honor this blunder was committed?"

Inattentive to the latter part of the harangue, I was occupied in noting the altered appearance of every thing around me, as the coach, passing Hyde Park Corner, proceeded down Piccadilly. Apsley House was in ruins. The space formerly left by the side of the Green Park, or only taken up by railing, was now filled with houses of a fantastic fashion. Still I could only

wonder, for I had not yet a knowledge that I was in the future.

For some days it had been in my mind, to make a visit to Mr. Murray's shop, and I expected that, in course, the stage would draw up at the White Horse, and so give me an opportunity to turn into Albemarle-street. But no White Horse appeared, and I was sure it must have been left behind, when the coach stopped for a moment at the sign of "the Cat and Fiddle," one I had not before noticed in that quarter. Dismounting and turning into what I *felt*, rather than knew to be Albemarle-street, I conned a new name at the corner, and continuing my way in deep and confused reverie, I halted instinctively, or as a blind man will do, at the well-remembered spot where erst a flaming yellow plate elucidated, in gigantic letters, the abode of the mighty publisher. Surprised, exceedingly, I was to find name and plate removed; and I began to doubt my own perceptions, when, walking bolt in, for the door stood wide open, I encountered in the shop a homely-looking French-dressed woman, and a meagre girl, weighing sausages to a crowd of

customers. In consternation, I asked, whither Mr. Murray had removed? They knew of no such individual. "What," I said, "the gentleman who lived there so immediately before themselves?" "I must have mistaken," they replied, "their predecessor was Mr. Suett the soap-chandler."

"Fire and fury!" I exclaimed, "soap and sausages! I tell thee, woman, the gentleman I spoke with here this day week, Mr. Murray, who has in hands my tract on ——," but they only interrupted me in laughter; except the green-faced girl who looked in a terrified manner at me, while she receded from the shop to the parlour, growing greener at every step; and at the same time a Dutch-built, bull-necked fellow passed her in the door-way, his face and step made up, I thought, to an adventurous sturdiness, that seemed to bode me little good; so I left the place.

As my acquaintances in London were, and are exclusively literary, I next bent my steps down to the library in Conduit-street. "The civil Mr. Henry Colburn, at least," thought I, "shall explain all this." I stopt before, as I conceived, his handsome front of pillars; but

on looking closer discerned an open gateway, occupied by carriages of a curious shape, and over the gate was placarded, "James Spoke, Coach-maker."

In a hurried pace, only recollecting, or only permitting myself to recollect Mr. Colburn's genteel removal, extension rather, to New Burlington-street, which had recently happened, I hastened thither. Conceive my start—the house was a feather-bed and bolster manufactory! I looked up and down the street, and afterwards walked up and down, but no Henry Colburn. An old lady, habited not unlike Meg's well-bred sister of Thule, passed by, and of her I inquired, "Is not this New-Burlington-street?" "Indubitably *no*," she answered; nor did she know aught of such a street, though an old resident in that part of town. "You are all bewitched or mad around me," I exclaimed, "all mad!" and at this the picturesque old gentlewoman drew back, eyed me in a misgiving way, shook her head, and hobbled rapidly off, muttering, very significantly, "the fool thinketh himself a wise man."

I rushed into Bond-street, to seek out one of the many brilliant sons of the trade, that

in my memory had inhabited it. It was an old clothes fair; a Monmouth-street, with Jew-barkers at every door. Almost wild with wonder and fears for my own sanity, I then got into Maddox-street; that, to mend the matter, was a street of undertakers and coffin-makers, those horrible shells lying in heaps around. I ran on and stopt before the church in Georges'-street, wishing to go in and pray for light, and the return of reason, when I was struck with a different building from that I had there been accustomed to see. A large slab over the entrance next caught my eye, and on it I read as follows: "The church of this parish was destroyed by fire in the year of our Lord 2017, and rebuilt in the year 2021. The Rev. Peter Scoales, curate; Mr. John Twist, and Mr. Joshua Fig, church-wardens." Instantly my knowledge came tumbling down upon me; I knew myself, and that I was in the time, and among the people to come. And my soul took comfort, and I collected my strength to see and learn; and unfolding my tablets, committed the notes from which I now compile.

CHAPTER IV.

—"Troja fuit"— OVID.

PASSING through Hanover-square, of which three sides were taken up with shops, I got into Regent-street. Alas! that theatrical chain of lath and plaister splendour was in utter ruins. Scarcely any of the original houses remained, and these in rags and patchwork; wind and rain, sun and frost, had done their natural work upon them. I was no longer disagreeably startled with the inconsistency of a crispin or a stay-maker, hammering or stitching under a Grecian portico. The ostentatious, misplaced, and, as I could afterwards learn, never-inhabited quadrant, had vanished. Sensible looking-houses, with plain, tradesman-like, brick faces, predominated, and even these were venerable; here and there was a shed. I must remark, in general application to the change that had come over the whole physiognomy of future

London, that noblemen's houses, retail shops, agent's offices, and the dwellings of petty gentry, individually bore some resemblance to their real character. You could scarcely confound one with another. They seemed in outside pretension, as distinct as they were in name, nature, and purpose. The only trait of my old Regent-street, that I thought I could now recognize, and even that smote my soul with something of the horror experienced by Voltaire, at a sight of his old mistress after half a century of separation, was the romantic steeple of the new church I had left unfinished, at the upper end, towards Portland-place. I well remembered its pristine assumption of form, agreeably resembling a thick, clumsy, antique candlestick, with an extinguisher placed over a snuff at the top; but the meagre remains of its former comeliness and symmetry now made me sigh instead of laugh.

Coming to the Piccadilly end, I thought to wind my way, as usual, through Sidney and Cranbourne allies, into the Strand; there was no alley of any kind; but by a new street on the site of the old Hay-market, I got down to Charing-cross, now unconscious of the statue of

the martyr, and walked towards the city. On my way I met the Bank and Post-office merged in Somerset-house, and the Exchange, counting-houses, money-brokers, and rooks, settled at the west side of Temple-bar. Beyond the bar all was squalidness and dilapidation; and as I walked along, I understood this quarter, principally on account of the fine, luscious brogue that filled my ears at every step, to be the St. Giles's, or Hibernian Alsatia of 2022-3. And scarcely could I bring myself to feel any regret at this transition of character, when I recollected its former unsuitableness, in point of narrowness of street, and particularly of flag-way, to the over populous groups of waggons, carts, stage-coaches, private vehicles of all descriptions, men, lads, women and children, that from morning to night pushed and scrambled for the bare liberty to get on, during my early acquaintance with the Strand, Fleet-street, and Cheapside. I am prone to seek among a number of causes, as Dr. Watts advises, for the master-cause of one effect; and when first struck with the ferocity of countenance, in which, as mere strangers, my countrymen regard each other while they hurry along; and the seemingly unconscious

rudeness with which the stronger passenger always jostles aside, or bears down the weaker, without regard to sex, age, or condition; thus earning for themselves the reputation of being the least polished mob of any civilized metropolis: when I observed all this, I say, my candour, assisted perhaps by my love of country, induced me to trace to the unhappy narrowness of the flag-ways, and their consequent inability to accommodate half the number of banking-house runners, groaning porters, and shop-parcel trotters and gallopers, each limited to minutes and quarters of minutes for the discharge of his duty, much of the irresistible habit of rudeness, and, afterwards, national character, that a good spacious flag-way might remedy, or, in the first instance, have entirely prevented.

In the muscular execution of any fiat of the will, whether one's own will, or the will of others, man is a mere machine, as a dancing-master, and a platoon of soldiers can illustrate; the body once in motion, it must continue so, till the end for which it at all received motion is completed; and in this sound view I have found an additional excuse, together with that already pleaded, for the necessitous impetuosity noticed.

Comparing men, women, and boys, on the flags in Fleet-street, with the Babel of vehicles that roll, and grind, and jar along in the middle of the way, and impartially considering all as machines, differing in power, I had only to study the evolutions of the one, in order to become reconciled to those of the other kind. First of all then, amid the tangle and jangle in the middle of the street, the prodigious waggon, drawn by its six or eight dromedaries, rather than horses, holds undisturbed course, never stopping a moment to accommodate or care for any other earthy vehicle, because it is twice as large, and therefore twice as dangerous as any other. Next, the coal cart, only second to the country-waggon, and paying homage only to it, and, in its absence, unquestioned despot of the public streets, defies, with its wheels, six feet in diameter, and bound in a hoop of iron, a foot and a half broad, and two inches thick, every variety of inferior, stage-coach, hackney-coach, and fashionable machine. On they go, these two vulgar monsters of the spoke tribe, losing not a second of time, secure in their own brutal strength and hugeness, and turning aside, or else dashing to pieces what-

ever simple or rash vehicle dares to reckon either on their politeness or compassion. Should a hard-worked, bilious-looking hack, or a spruce, dandy chariot, or an elegant, feminine chaise, forget or presume not to stand out of the way—crash!—it soon has cause to feel its insignificance. As to bakers' carts, and slender, ricketty, provision carts, and laundresses' carts, dog-drawn or man-impelled, let them shuffle and wriggle, and cringe about, and follow in whatever wake they can. No machine, the meanest, with the appendage of two horses, even though these two horses be stone-blind, or rib-marked, or three-legged, is bound to recollect their existence. And such, I have often thought, is Fleet-street, on the flags as well as on the pavé; such I have often thought is the world! where preponderance, no matter how gained, whether by mere exterior, by wealth, by arrogance, or even by hollow presumption, or big vapouring, invariably pushes to the wall, or overturns in the mire, humility, modesty, nervousness, worth! In fact the implied maxim of the strong is, "get out of my way, or suffer for it;" while the less muscular must be content to step aside, and yield way, and wait, and put up

with an occasional buffet; *their* maxim reduced almost to the poor prudence of *sauve qui peut.*

But continuing my walk, I was rejoiced to find that St. Paul's had benefitted by the general migration westward. Ground having become cheap, a considerable plot was cleared, levelled, and grassed, about it, and for the first time, I got, to my satisfaction, a close view of the mighty mausoleum of Wren. Yes; notwithstanding the common decay around, and notwithstanding the meanness of our first George, and the Dousterswivel scheming of his German parasites, there it was, still lifting up its eternal head, to the glory and triumph of British art. "Live!" I exclaimed, "live for ever, giant pile! and though not a giant by the standard of thy huge parent, still live, a combination of its diffuse majesty, and superior in strength and endurance! What though the almost merely physical power of man has hung over thee, in mid air, no transplanted quarry of calcareous rock, a power that at Stonehenge was once, however exercised, as successfully exercised, surely," said I, "all-mastering mind has balanced thy parts with a finer certainty! What though the genius and life of one great man

were enough at once to conceive, mature, and perfect thee, while thy monstrous mother grew slowly under the hands of some thirteen masters, and as many sovereign pontiffs;* still was that one mind the kindred fellow of Boyle, of Newton, and of Evelyn! Live for ever!"

After this enthusiastic apostrophe, I wrought my way, with much difficulty, through the snares and filth of the old city, down to London Bridge. "First," said I, as I approached, "where is the Monument? Gone!" I answered, and gone indeed it was, having been reduced some fifty years before to quick-lime and dust, by a second voracious burning of all the houses and streets about it, that thus brought down, in time, its "tall and bullying" swagger over the pretty conflagration of 1666. Yet I could not refuse a sigh to the fate of the finest isolated column in the world; and of which three sides

* St. Peter's was begun by Bramante, uncle of Raffaelle, in the reign of Pope Julius II., contemporary with our Henries VII. and VIII., and continued by Giulio di San Gallo, Raffaelle da Urbino, Balthazar Peruzzi, Antonio di San Gallo, Giocondo, Michaelangelo, Giulio Romano, Dominico and Giovanni Fontano, Giacamo della Porta, Carlo Maderno, Luigi Cigoli, Borromini, Carlo Rainaldi, and Bernini, and completed under Innocent X., contemporary with our Charles I.

of the pedestal, were, according to the serious Mr. Elmes, "covered with inscriptions *in Latin*, for the benefit of *the citizens*."

While standing on London Bridge, and not much pleased with its outlandish construction, I chanced on an intelligent person, of whom I inquired if it was the same for which an old friend of my family, Dr. Busby, had in 1823 sent in his gratuitous plans and estimates?

"My dear sir," interrupted the stranger, "I know little of the doctor you mention, or perhaps the bridge either. It is true, however, that about the time you speak of, London Bridge was badly rebuilt; and has since, near seventy years ago, been replaced by that on which you now walk. I cannot, for the soul of me, guess what the people of those days meant. We know by records, that one of the reasons advanced in 1823, or thereabouts, for pulling down the then bridge, and erecting another, was to lessen the mortality of watermen and passengers going under; some lives per week, I believe, were sacrificed to its hen-coop arches and queer buttresses; but by a continuation of the same records, we further learn, that after the job in 1823-4, the average of the human

lives lost, was three and three-fourths for every day in the year. I repeat it, sir, I wonder what they all meant."

The intelligent stranger then walked off, and for some time I amused myself with the spacious, if not fine panoramic view from the bridge. Alas! it was all new to me. I strove in vain to recognize many old land-marks. "The towers of Julius," ("but that was a bounce,") were no longer "London's lasting shame;" in fact I could not see them; and all around, strange spires and steeples, emulating the fanciful originality of the new steeple I have already spoken of, confused my impressions or perceptions of the old. A serious circumstance, hereafter to be noticed, helped, more than time, to reduce the grim and ugly grandeur of the old fastness, "by many a foul and midnight murder fed."

With increased difficulty, I made my tortuous way from this up to Holborn, which I found was still well enough to look at; the continuous perspective of Oxford-street also seemed decent, though, necessarily, the aspects of both were much changed.

At about what was once the corner of Stratford-place, I spied a second-hand book-stall,

the first literary mart of any kind that had as yet cheered my view; and rejoiced I was to see the proprietor, and we spoke at some length together. Inquiring from him the residences of the principal publishers, I heard him with amazement, talk of Mr. Quarto of Primrose-hill, and of Mr. Duodecimo of Highgate; and at length I became aware that a new west-end, and a new trade-end overran the fair rurality of Hampstead, and the Regent's park; that a magnificent palace, the first worthy of the character, wealth, rank, and Sovereign of Great Britain, had for some time, that is for the last hundred years, been built in the latter-mentioned quarter; that the Alpha cottages had long since subsided under a brilliant square; that St. John's Wood road was a principal street of business, while the intermediate streets and squares, between Oxford-street and the Regent's canal, were occupied by shops and tradespeople of the middling stamp.

CHAPTER V.

" Hoity, toity, what a sweep of vanity comes here!"
DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

"BUT, my good Sir, from what part of the country have you come up, or perhaps you are a foreigner?" continued the second-hand book man, glancing his eye waggishly over my person.

" Why do you ask the question?" said I.

" By your pardon, Sir," he replied—" but you must yourself be aware that your clothes are cut in the most amusing way!"—

" Perhaps," I answered, not liking the freedom of the small retailer of literature; and therewith I bent my steps towards the new city he had been describing.

I found things pretty much as he had promised, however. Within about forty yards of Primrose-hill, I got into the hurry and splash and dash of the town, in a broad, exotic-looking street, that swept on straight before me. At right

angles with it was the Bond-street of 2023; and now, while again attracted by the costume of the people of every class, I began seriously to bring to mind the last remarks of the humble bookseller, and to deem he had spoken to the purpose. No coat, hat, or petticoat I saw, assimilated with mine, or with my recollections. How shall I describe the amazing shew of extravagance and novelty around me? I cannot pretend or attempt to describe it; indeed all detail must naturally be forgiven me, when it is recollected that I beheld in perpetual stir and confusion, groups after groups of persons clad in a style of costume, not only different from any thing I had ever seen, but also independent of all my historical or antiquarian reading; independent of every fashion and cut this world, so far as it has gone, hath invented or dreamt of; and only claiming, in my mind, a kind of farcical association with the bundle of non-descript gear in which Mr. Joseph Grimaldi sometimes ekes out his very original characters; I mean those exclusive of the Christmas pantomime.

And yet have I a swimming, general notion of the whole; of the loungers, bloods, dandies, or as they were at last termed, the hocus-pocuses,

with their uncombed locks and ample beards, which plainly intimated to me an end of Mrs. Packwood, and the two sons of song she once patronized; and with their sugar-loaf hats, coming to a point like Touchstone's, in height about two feet, and deficient in leaf; and with their skin-tight, cotton web, nay, often, silk inexpressibles, in which a few favored Adonises at length triumphed over the reign of Cossac trousers, that like charity covered a multitude of sins; but also in which every variety of distortion exhibited. And the ladies too! on they bounded or glided, without stays, or any other unnatural make shape; and—the innocent privilege of the drawing-room and opera-box, at length extending itself to the street,—well content with one gauzy flow of Grecian drapery, that left their maiden or matronly bosoms prettily naked, and sometimes looped up at the sides, displayed to fascination, the round polished leg, and the rich, fat tip of the classic knee. Do I mistake, or did I indeed once more see restored the towering bulwark of stuffed hair, the system, that at separate periods so much interested St. Gregory and the Spectator?—One other glimpse at the men. Their superabundant cloaks trailed

on the ground, and they wore yellow, violet, or tawny coloured boots and stockings.—"As is oftenest the case," said I, "the fair are most rational and tasteful, considering the nature of this hot, frying day; but good gods! see what figures those fellows cut in their conjuring caps and yellow hose, and "cross-garterings—but what of that?" are they rational beings I behold? and is this a world of common sense?"

From men and women in the extreme of the mode, I removed my studies to the crowds of middling and poor people, that, as best they might, aped their betters; and now was I amused to the utmost! Such grotesque crowds of servants, porters, carters, pickpockets, and blackguards, *ad libitum*, all shuffling along in their salt-basket hats, ragged mantles, tattered inexpressibles, and dubious-coloured boots! Then came young women or girls, carrying bandboxes or bonnets, or going out to the near shop with a plate and cream jug, all as cool as their mistresses, all as classical! I laughed till I was tired. Anon a chain of military gentlemen strode down the street, sweeping, like a chain-ball, all before them, cased in impenetrable steel, and with helmets as ponderous as any old model

of Greece or Rome; the only difference between them and the heroes of Plutarch or Tacitus existing, to my view, in a profusion of tawdry over their clanking harness. At first I concluded that war through the world was the order of the day; else what use of such astounding shew? But I afterwards learned it was a time of profound peace, and that there had not been a battle fought during the last forty years. By way of keeping up their professional character, however, some of these soldiers practised, I was also given to understand, upon the nerves and timidity of old women and girls; making war on the tastes and arrangements of every blow-out to which they happened to be invited; and above all manifesting their hostility to *card* parties. Shakespeare was rather in the right, thought I—

"How many cowards whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins (lips)
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars!"

No doubt I was at first hugely excited with the outrageousness of the entire new fashions I beheld; but perhaps, I afterwards argued, I may only mistake, in concluding every thing to

be wrong, because every thing is different from my own standard of prejudice. I must not object to the becoming airiness, at least, of these good people's attire; that of the men particularly; for what can be more headstrong than was the grossness of male costume, during the summer months, in the old world I have so long outlived? And here I beg leave to rehearse the sequel of my argument. We shear our sheep and shaggy dogs in summer, and why not shear ourselves of the mountain of wool, under which we heave, and pant, and perspire along? Our present race of ladies is, indeed, the truly rational and reasoning half of the creation from May to September. Soon as the angry sun begins to shed his summer beams, they doff at once their beaver hats and bonnets, their flannel petticoats, their furred pelisses, their muffs, tippets, and boots, and don the more genial textures of straw, cotton, silk crape, gauze, gossamer-net and kidskin; while we continue to brave his noon-tide wrath in the massive armour we had opposed to the biting and blustering of a December day.

Only let us coolly, if we can coolly, consider. There is, first, an inside dress, weighing at least

four pounds. A vest, lined, and in many instances double lined, is six pounds more. The inexpressibles may fairly be estimated at from ten to twelve pounds more. Then comes the coat! the high-caped, double-lapelled, double-lined, double-padded and wadded, double-breasted, long skirted, English coat! This, moderately averaged with buttons, pockets, and trimmings, will add fifteen pounds more. A beaver or silk hat, will be three at the least. Stockings and boots would weigh four pounds in any crane in the world; we must not forget a yard and half of solid muslin rolled round the neck; and now let us see how the account stands. Inside dress, four—vest, six—inexpressibles, twelve—coat, fifteen—hat, three—boots and stockings, four—and one for the cravat; four and six are ten, ten and twelve are twenty-two, twenty-two and fifteen are thirty-seven, and three are forty, and four are forty-four, and one are forty-five; forty-five pounds! very nearly three stone weight upon the body of every ordinary sized man you meet walking down Piccadilly, at two o'clock of a scorching, sirocco-breathing day! I swoon at the bare thought!

Let it be observed, that in the foregoing es-

timate, I have made no allowance for the very general cases of such as wear inside-inside flannel dresses; of such as allow refuge, amid the mazes of their hair, to interdicted powder and pomatum; of such as carry sticks, canes, or quizzing glasses, snuff-boxes, and trinkets. Let it be further held in mind that I have not dwelt on the almost delirious fashion after which these treble layers of flax and wool are packed round the body. But there is the waistcoat buttoned closely across the breast, plaiting and pressing a cumbersome sack of linen, and perhaps a still more unwieldy bag of flannel, all round the person; then, first the lining of the coat sleeve, and next the sleeve itself, fitting tightly to the arm and shoulder; excluding every breath of air, and smothering and sending back every particle of heated vapour that frets through the feverish pores; there is the shirt-collar pressing against the cheeks like sheet iron, and buttoned or clasped violently over the throat; the cravat, coiling as a great serpent round that again, or else the whalebone-ribbed stock, after which the pillory can have no terrors; and the suspenders! I had forgot *them!* Of themselves, more oppressive by their

dragging and tugging down the collar-bone, and distorting the muscles of the breast, than the mere gravitation of all the other burdens taken together!—I own the horrors of the incubus and night cramp!

Was there ever more decided though systematic madness? We call nations savage which temper the clothing of the body to a broiling sun; but I suspect, if we were superior to them only on account of our industrious fomentation of heat and fever, in a clime where both are sufficiently active, common sense and common decency would refuse us the palm of even comparative civilization. Part of our summer is as fierce as any of the more eastern or very western summers; and why should not our costume be proportionably light and graceful? or, without leaving home, why should we be inconsistent with ourselves? While a lady's arm enjoys all the natural comforts of ventilation through one loose flutter of gauze or crape, why should our arms be bound up like those of a malefactor on his way to the gallows? Why should our throats be collared like a mastiff dog? Or why should we not be content to carry about, each man his several thousand pounds of atmospheric fardel,

and not thus uselessly and madly add to the curse of our overloaded nature?

Such considerations tended, in the first instance, to make me tolerant of the fashions of 2023; but a sight I afterwards enjoyed fully reconciled me to them, inasmuch as it taught me to forgive, in a contemplation of the incessant folly of men and women, in one shape or another, the temporary mode in which that folly now chanced to come under my observation. Attached to the British Museum of this future people was a gallery of great length, having hung up on the walls at either side, original specimens of the garmenture of English men and women since first we became a known nation. I had often before regarded such a thing as highly desirable; and to such a place I thought I would invite, or had I the power, compel the monthly visits of those of my countrywomen and countrymen, who not only passively, but ardently, and not only ardently but in the light of an indispensable vassalage, submit their fair, and manly, and free bodies to the ligatures and livery of that most weak, despotic, and whimsical of tyrants, fashion. Here should the laced, straitened and *waisted* dandy or dandyess,

whose beau-ideal of figure rests within the narrow span of slimness, and to whom any other view of the body is out of taste, out of conception, impossible—here should they learn, while studying the flow and superfluity of a more polished age than their own, to doubt, at least, their sovereign and exclusive right to rack, and wrench, and torture poor human nature. Here, in the contemplation of the serious and apt costume of the old cavalier; of Edward—of Harry—of Marlborough—should the tricked and tawdry thing, either miscalled, or misdressed, soldier in the present day, be taught to despise his own buffoonery, and change his tailor. Here, in a word, should the trembling slaves of tailors, dress-makers, stay-makers, and milliners, of all descriptions, find, in the ficklenéss, and stupid and ridiculous vagaries of fashion, abundant cause to blush at a servitude so utterly unmeaning and unbecoming, if not degrading.

But to take one lounge through the gallery. On the first peg, at the north-west side, hung, in lieu of a specimen of costume which it was impossible to procure, inasmuch as it never had had existence, the preserved, painted, and tattooed skin of an aboriginal Briton, such as he

was found at the first visit of the Romans. I saw some exquisites of 2023 regard this with a complacency that shewed how proud they were of their honest, primitive ancestor. On the next peg dangled a scant piece of wolf-skin, the first simple encroachment on the unconsciousness I have just described. Next was a clumsy imitation of the classic costume of the conquerors; and next the heavy incumbrance of the Lombards. Passing many intervening pegs, I shall particularly notice the silken and embroidered foppery of Henry the Second's era, when the short mantle appeared, and with it, for the first time, all the gingerbread pomp of coronation robes, and robes of state. But about this age an old chronicler describes, better than I can hope to do, and while he also mentions several statutes passed to clip its extravagance, the dandy costume of his day.

"The commons," he says, "were besotted in excess of apparel, in wide surcoats reaching to their loins, some in a garment reaching to their heels, close before, and strutting out on the sides, so that on the back they made men seem women, and this they call by a ridiculous name, gown. They have another weed of silk that

they call paltock; their hose are of two colours, or pied, which with latchets, which they call herlots, they tie to their paltocks, without any breeches. Their girdles are of gold and silver, some worth twenty marks; their shoes and their pattens are snouted and piked more than a finger long, crooked upwards, which they call crackowes, resembling the devil's claws."

I again pause before the peg on which was suspended a fashionable suit of the taste of Richard the Second's time; and again preferring the description of a cotemporary to any I can supply, Chaucer will on this occasion serve as showman.

"Alas! may not a man see, as in our days, the sinful costly array of clothing, such that maketh it so dear, to the harm of the people, not only the cost of embroidering, the disguised indenting, or barring, ounding, platting, winding, or bending, and semblable waste of cloth in vanity; but there is also the costly furring in their gowns, so much pouncing of chisel to make holes, so much dogging of sheirs-forche, with the superfluity in length of the aforesaid gown, trailing in the dung and in the mire, on horse and also on foot, as well of man as of wo-

man." "Now as to the outrageous array of women, God wot! that though the visages of some of them seem full chaste and debonnaire, yet notify in her array and attire, licorousness and pride."

The wife of Richard the Second patronised a sprouting head-dress, contrived like horns, and also trains of excessive length, for the accommodation and proper display of which a line of pegs was allowed in the gallery.

On a peg, devoted among others to the costume of the reign of Henry the Fourth, hung a pair of shoes worn before the issuing of a royal proclamation, which enacted "that men's shoes should not be above six inches in breadth over the toes:" so, from this, the rational shape and dimensions of those exhibited may be inferred. By their side I was struck with a profusion of dark cloth, reaching from the ceiling to the ground, the result of another enactment "that no person, under the dignity of a lord, should wear from that time any gown or mantle that was not of a length to cover—his buttocks." Observing some fox-tails near me, and hanging over a curious cut female gown or skirt, I referred to the catalogue, and ascertained that they had

been used as padding under this very gown, in anticipation of our exploded saddle, perhaps, or else of the more ancient hoop.

On separate pegs hung Elizabeth's ruff, and the first pair of silk stockings she ever wore, or which ever had been worn in England; and in the same compartment, the odd kind of things like gothic niches, windows, or arches, in which the ladies of her day most unaccountably disguised their heads. Next I admired the easy, flowing, and at the same time, scanty drapery that afforded to Kneller and Lely such good opportunities for the almost unreserved study of the female figure; next the cylinder waists, balloon gowns, and branching caps, of Anne's time, together with the blowzed periwigs, and niggard skirts of the men; and at the very next step, all this useless hair, still, however, too precious to be put out of sight, was shut up in a bag; while the caps simultaneously dwindled, and the petticoat, now ribbed and substantially stiffened with bone, stood, independent of peg or any other aid, firmly on the floor, not unlike a huge cathedral bell, mouth downwards; the short male-skirt, growing to the ankle, by its side.

This I thought a little more rational; but lo! on the very succeeding peg was a man's coat with diminished skirts again, and a hoop of inconceivable magnitude! And what on the very next?—A gown without hoop of any kind, and so short, and with such a dip about the bosom as I shall not dwell upon; but its consort coat furnished with skirts that swept the floor! Here also was a lady's wig, made to lie flat to the top of the head, and supplied with hanging ringlets that must sometimes have tripped up her heels; and a reduced gentleman's bag; and—I had entirely forgot—a little china saucer, laid on a shelf, half filled with discarded patches, round, square, angular, and hyperbolical; all the worse for the wear. And then, such quaint or monstrous contrarieties of female and male hats, shoes, and boots, the jarring products of one little era! Hats like pent-houses, and hats that could not ward off a drop of rain from the nose; hats cocked into a point little less than ferocious, and hats like a round flat cymbal; shoes with soles, even and thin as a pancake, and shoes with stilts under the heels, of half a foot high.

Now I was getting towards my own happy era,

that is, my first era, of from 1775 to 1823; and here I could accompany with increased precision the rapid contrasts and fluctuations in dress within that short span of time. I dated it from the peg on which drooped the poor pig-tail, a last meagre representative of the capacious hair-bag of former days, side by side with the flabby, shapeless body-coat and vest, unconscious of padding or stuffing. As my eye glanced along the continuous pegs, how I did chuckle at the ensuing variations! Wigs and wig-blocks properly substituted real heads in illustrating the fashions of the hair—and there I saw the two and the three-buckled wig, the bob, the scratch, and the top-knot wig;—the top-knot! Why there is magic to provoke laughter in the very sound of the epithet! Let all of my readers who in their time have worn this badge, only call it to mind: the head cropt close in every part, except on the crown, where, frizzed and provoked by the barber, the isolated top-knot started up like a cock-a-too's! But I must not dally with any particular scrap of costume. Behold the superannuated battalion of coats and inexpressibles! After a pleasing diversity of others, behold the long-backed coat of only a few years ago, of

which the buttons that set bounds to the back, encroached and spread over a more exuberant region; and with it the tight web pantaloons, only to be rivalled by the taste of 2023. Almost instantly after, pause before the smart substitute, of which the back terminated under the shoulder-blades, while its accompaniment is a pair of trousers formed by the casual juncture of two empty sacks, at first reaching only to the middle of the leg, and then suddenly extending to the heels. Look at the pretty dissimilitude of skirts—the long, square skirt, the lively swallow-tail, and the reformed jacket-skirt. Observe the relief in hats: the tom-fool hat, dwindling to the top, superseded by its overgrown brother, twelve inches in the crown, and overhanging its base three inches at every side; the Joliffe hat, the Stephny hat, and the Lord Fife hat.

But this row is nothing to the female display that balances it on the opposite wall. To begin with the very outside costume, and ending where we may—here is the capote and black satin-laced and fringed mantle, in which our mothers made war on hearts. They had a successor, of which the name alone must be irresistible; and here it is—the jock! What an

expression! And next came in the fly-offs, and next the Spanish mantle, short, middling, and superabundant. Taking leave to penetrate farther towards the ladies of this day, we pass on and examine the exploded fashion of gowns. First then, see the gown of about 1807, with a venerable portion of back, but rather stinted in breadth, fitting tight all way down, and expressing forms with which the reigning stays did not interfere, while its tail brushed or broomed the ground. Soon after we meet the back a foot and half long, made out by a pair of stays such as was worn by Queen Anne. A step farther, and we have the no-back at all, but, in place of one, a hump, formed by a cushion, industriously and ostentatiously introduced between the shoulders, and the rest of the gown expressive of—skirt. This was the gown, too, that with its attendant stays, left a lady primitive in a straight line across back, arms, and neck, from the middle of the arm upward, and forced toward her throat, the last form specified, while at the other extremity it took leave of the figure a little below the knee; so that its entire stretch, in proportion to a middle-sized lady of five feet three inches, was about two feet and a half, half quarter.

Let us not omit the bonnets and hats that hovered between the few last gowns we have noticed. Here are hats turned up as saucily, and indeed as vulgarly, as a snub-nose; hats made by bending a round flat of straw or beaver down on the cheeks; and plain, unaffected, sailor-hats. This bonnet is aptly illustrated by a reversed coal-scuttle, or flour-scoop; and *that*, by the same thing, if you cut off the lighter half of either. One is so niggard as not to permit, without observation, the most innocent play of eye; another so prodigious that in any church or parlour in the world a lover might tell his tale under it as safely as if the lady and himself were alone in a boudoir; aye, and do more than tell—kiss and tell; though this seemed to be only at the liberty of the wearer: for if she chose to secure herself by proper tightening of the ribbons, a man must have remained for ever his full yard from her sweet lips. It realized, pretty nearly, the old adage of a needle in his bundle of straw; while it also provoked for those bonnets, the expressive title of kiss-me-if-you-can.

Shall I proceed farther, and after having descanted on the coats and gowns, &c. I had left in reigning excellence behind me—that is, be-

fore I quitted England in search of the proper means to die properly—shall I go on some further pegs into futurity, and admonish my dear countrywomen and countrymen how ridiculous they and their children are yet destined to become? No. To the mere puppets of dress an honest philosopher must wish some retributive punishment; so, lest any prophecy of mine might put them on their guard, I will hold my tongue, and, as the worthiest fate to which they may be abandoned, I will even let them study to grow as ridiculous as they can.

CHAPTER VI.

Utrum

—"Mourn not at ought our realm acquires,
Here, pleased, see Dulness' mighty wings outspread,
To hatch a new Saturnine age of lead."

POPE.

horum?

"No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a griesly band,
I see them sit, they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land."

GRAY.

"A FOREIGN author, I suppose, sir? Mr. Q. never sees authors he does not know," said a smart shopman in Mr. Quarto's shop, at Primrose Hill, when I simply requested to speak with his principal. I thought the question and remark of the Mercury odd enough, but not seeming to mind either, proposed to purchase the newest poem. He handed me six, all equally new, that is to say, all published or republished in a sixth or twentieth edition, the day before. And six regular epics they were, each in twenty-four books. I asked for more and more verse,

and got successively two additional epics, two volumes of pastorals, two of pindarics, three of elegies, and twelve of moral essays. I stared, and begged to see something in the free and easy manner of Wordsworth or Coleridge.

"No poets of that name, sir," said the shopman.

"But in their style, my good friend?"

"Know nothing of their style, sir."

"Zounds!" cried I, forgetting my usual sweetness of temper, and thus approaching an oath, "what have ye done with the 'singularly wild and beautiful poem,' and with the 'Excursion,' and—"

"Beg pardon a moment," interrupted the lad, turning from me to a thin, laborious-looking gentleman who then came in.—"You intend to ask for Mr. Quarto, sir," he continued, addressing this individual, "*not* at home, not at home, sir, I assure you."

"Sir," said the gentleman, "you know my business is of the utmost importance."

"Not at home, sir."

"Since the seventh edition of my moral essays, I have never chanced to get an hour's conversation."

"Not at home, I assure you, good Mr. Drudge; but as to the essays, I have heard Mr. Quarto say they get on pretty well; and if you could be prepared with the alterations and additions he suggests, for the next edition, he makes little doubt—little indeed;" and away the incipient arbiter bounded, leaving Mr. Drudge and myself together.

"Was ever any thing like it?" said my chance companion, half talking at me as he dared to fume about the shop. "Without vanity, I presume you know me, sir?" he continued, directly addressing me. I replied, recollecting in good season the free hint of the second-hand book man, that although a foreigner, I could not but have heard of Mr. Drudge. His eyes sparkled, and half recovered from his chagrin, the author went on.

"Yet, sir, you witness a scene, that the world that does me the honor to talk of me could scarcely fancy. You are a stranger in London, sir, and if we walk a little way together, perhaps, I may astonish you by imparting the details:" so we walked out of the shop, and then through Highgate, and after a succession of crowded streets, towards the country, arm in arm.

"The days of Curll and Lintot are come back, then," said I, after the complainant had given me his whole case of hardship; "and publishers again rule the rod. It is again their 'turn to ride in clover,' and

"Who with Lintot shall contend?"

"But, Mr. Drudge, since you have permitted me to be your debtor for so much valuable information, perhaps you could add to the favor by letting me have an idea of the present literary creed of your country and day. Pray what kinds of poetry are most admired?"

"Epics, sir, in the first place, Moral Essays in the second; Pastorals, and all that thing, in the third. We have Mr. Argument, the author of Bergem-op-zoom, and Sering-a-patam."

"I have just had the books in my hand," said I, "but they were out of my way."

He turned quickly, and stared at me.

"That is too dear for me," I resumed, correcting myself; "What did he get for them each?"

"A round price, sir, perhaps a fifty each. But that is not to the question. Next to Argument we have Compile, an epic man too; then

comes in, if you please, my humble self; and then there is Drag, the pastoralist; and Bounce, the pindarist; and Whine, the eulogist; and Cant, the sonnetteer; with many others of less note in these different walks"—

"Then I presume your poets of esteem, in the present day, are such as have counterparts or archetypes"—

"No doubt," anxiously interrupting me, "Homer, Virgil, Tasso, Milton, Pope, Dryden, and Young, Phillips and Hammond, Gray and Cowley, and their like, are our models."

"Are there no original soarings, pray?"

"Oh—what, sir?" said he, hastily.

"Original," I replied, with much coolness. "A senseless word, sir, that ages upon ages of experience have altogether exploded. Ours is the matured world, sir; thousands of fools and of failures have taught us, that nothing can be done out of the footsteps of a great precedent."

"And may I respectfully ask how you dispose of, amid your old literature, the names of Scott, Southey, Byron, Coleridge, Sotheby, Shelley, Moore, Crabbe, Rogers, Campbell, and two hundred and fifty others I could mention?"

He looked attentively at me, for some time; then continued.

"I do not pretend, sir, to understand your foreign notions of English literature. You were always queer, you Frenchmen and Italians, on that point. You always arranged us in your own way; but you have here mixed up with the names of some old English poets, many that I take for granted, only exist, in this day, on the hereditary book-shelves bequeathed to you by your great grandfather; and whom I have not the honor to recognize. Are you aware that you speak altogether of an age, towards which we cannot rationally entertain much respect?"

"You amaze me," said I.

"Do I so? but this is my house, and also, as it happens, my dinner-hour, and if you join Mrs. Drudge and myself at a homely repast, we may perhaps talk farther on the subject."

CHAPTER VII.

" Cornelius, it is certain, had a most superstitious veneration for the ancients." MARTINUS.

" Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hush'd the stormy main;
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed;
Mountains, ye mourn in vain,
Modred, whose magic song,
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topt head."
GRAY.

BEFORE I recur to the evening conversation at Mr. Drudge's, I shall say a word of the dinner itself, and of some circumstances that attended its consumption, which well prepared me for any novelties in opinion, or aught beside, of this ripe age.

In the first place, having expected to see on the table such plain, honest dishes, as, from former habit, I had set down in my mind before a gentleman of Mr. Drudge's pursuits and modest station; a rib of roast-beef or a shoulder of Welsh mutton, for instance: I was enough

amazed to observe, spread out, a profusion of little things resembling no human dinner-fare, that in any country, and particularly in England, I had ever shared or contemplated. Mixtures they must indeed have been, of roots, fruits, and animal food, as by eating of them I inferred; but of what roots, fruits, or especial kind of meat, it went beyond my palate to determine. France, up to the day at which I write, hath not invented such trifling with a serious stomach; and on inquiry I found, that the like was the universal fare of Old England in the year 2023; so that it was no longer a pleasant national bye-word, "Oh! the roast-beef of old England! Oh! the rich English roast-beef!"

But this is little. As we sat to table, I saw, at the far side of each plate, and in lieu of knife and fork, a small square box, of which to know the use, at first exceedingly puzzled me. Anon, however, and when I thought we should wait for the maid-servant to lay knives and forks, Mr. Drudge tapped separately these little boxes, and behold, forth started, from each, the very things I had wanted, that is to say, knives and forks; which, so soon as Mr. Drudge

had helped us, commenced of their own accord, to cut and hash the contents of every plate, while, once in the quarter of a minute, the knife reposed for a second, and the fork presented itself to the level of the mouth, laden with a proper portion of food. I could not, at first sight of this novelty, avoid starting back, and refusing the friendly proffer of the fork; which Mr. Drudge observing, caused him to laugh, and then he said,

"Oh, I see our specimen of mechanism surprises you; but I thought these things were becoming known on the continent. Wait, however, till you see a little more of our scientific inventions, you will say we have advanced indeed."

I made no doubt; and, still a little shy of the bristling up and close approaches of the fork, proceeded in my dinner. When it was over, and that Mrs. Drudge, whom I soon knew for a profound lady, had, with some difficulty, coaxed or scolded the romping children out of the room, we three, that is, Mr. and Mrs. Drudge and myself, wheeled our chairs, chairs of such a fanciful shape! closer round the table, and literary conversation was resumed.

I must preface my faithful report of these discourses, by observing, that whenever I can succeed in carrying myself a few hundred years still farther into the future, I make slight doubt, many of the opinions now to be truly detailed by me, will be found exploded, and others, which they oppose, again established in their stead.

"The poets of the age we have spoken of," said Mr. Drudge, "were original, I grant, but *how* is the question. There may be very original folly, and very original rhyme, of only a very foolish cast. In a bewildered state of taste, divergements may be taken for enterprize, and innovations for laudable daring; besides, what we are unable to attain, it is but too natural we should strive to depreciate; and hence an Epic could easily be undervalued; as if when the first critics of the world's brightest era had once ascertained, that Homer could never be rivalled, it was not only proper, but necessary, that to the end of time he should be imitated; that his poem should get a specific name, and that every succeeding poem, claiming to be of the first class, should, like it, have heroes, battles, and machinery."

At the mention of this word I lost my temper, in the very first instance, and entered on a speech.

"Machinery, Mr. Drudge! if ever there was a word—there have been many—that eminently above the rest poured out the curse of affectation and mannerism on poetry, it is that very word, machinery." "What, sir!"

"Allow me, my dear sir. About three thousand years ago, a credulous, though magnificent story-teller, framed, out of the common traditions and superstitions of his native place, a wild and original romance, reciting it for his daily bread. He had heard of an Utopian war waged by his countrymen against another state; he had heard popular exaggeration, like the Scandinavian, or Scotch, or Irish monstrosities about Woden or Fingal, of the prowess of certain chiefs at that war; he had heard of an Olympus, as the Scald heard of his Valhalla; and he mixed together the feats of ideal heroes, and the family quarrels of indecent gods and goddesses. It was by chance or necessity he used these materials. 'They lay in his way, and he found them;' or the progress of his age and society afforded none others. I know, sir,

I do not echo Bossu's meagre theory; I cannot fancy Homer to have been a subtle school metaphysician, merely for his convenience; but thus, without rule or compass, did Homer think the Iliad; and I am not able, therefore, to see why it should be erected into a rule and compass for others."

"I forgive you, sir," said Mr. Drudge, "in consideration of your foreign prejudice; you are not bound to agree with us; and on your own head be your blindness or obstinacy. Let us go back to the point from which you have so briskly varied.

"The originality already touched on, was the first cause of the rapid and total decay of literature after, I think, the year 1856."

"The total decay!" I repeated.

"Yes, sir, total; a gloom succeeded, impervious as that which overspread what has been called the dark ages, until we wrought a regeneration, and out of the void called true and rational light again. The poets of from about 1800 to 1835, glancing wider and wider from the centre of irradiation, at last strayed beyond the very verge of the circle, and tumbled over into treble night."

"And, my love," said Mrs. Drudge, "I think you will find, that the amazing multiplication of poets and poetry about that time, was another cause of the succeeding scarcity."

"Yes; that, together with the unsympathizing growth of political economists, philanthropists, and system-makers in general."

"I remember," said I, "Malthus and Godwin, Adam Smith and Ricardo, Baring and Lord John, planned out the poor people at their pleasure; though his lordship found time for a tragedy, too, in which Schiller's and Barry Cornwall's love-sick hero reappeared, as a sturdy civil and religious reformer."

"The daily competition among new poets was, as I can generally understand, without parallel," continued Mr. Drudge.

"Yes," I resumed, "and of every new swarm, all were first rate, all excellent. Why, I knew of my own knowledge—hem! an ancestor of mine knew, of his own knowledge, three hundred and three ladies and gentlemen, each of whom sent forth song of the first water. It was a generation of metre. The mothers elect of the previous one, must have eaten and drunk the strongest poetical stimulants."

"And during that certain state perused nothing but sublimities, and to the papering of their hair, used verse, chiming and blank," said the author.

"Fie, Mr. Drudge," said his lady.

"Yea," I went on, "it was a second deluge. The earth, and the people thereof, were under the waters of poesy, so that the very hill-tops scarcely rose above its influence. We—*they* had self-taught sons of inspiration from the remotest peaks of Cheviot, Cornwall, Cumberland, Ireland's Eye, and the Devil's Punch-Bowl. The cotemporary periodicals witnessed this overflow. Once a month, nay, once a week, there was poetry in magazines and other publications, equal to any of the most popular, and superior to some. A poor fellow, paid off with his twenty guineas a sheet, was bound to write as well as Byron, Campbell, or Hogg, if he hoped for his corner, or his stipend."

"Of course, in the universal scramble and clatter, the public could neither discriminate nor listen to any, and so none of the new aspirants were ever read," said Mr. Drudge.

"Or who could have ears or attention for one of them," said the lady, "while fresh books,

from the old, trust-worthy manufacturers, poured in, day after day, during the inferior uproar, and with a demand on public indulgence only equal to it? Who would open an uncut sheet, by the Lord knows whom, when there were reams of new volumes, uncut also, title-paged with names of conceded immortality?"

"Of the names you mentioned before dinner, we acknowledge four or five with great willingness. *The Pleasures of Hope* combines, to our view, fine poetry, kept within manly bounds, sound sentiment, and what are rarer qualities than genius, good taste and good feeling," said the author.

"A lady should, perhaps most properly, pronounce on the exquisite sister-poem, *The Pleasures of Memory*," said Mrs. Drudge.

"Perhaps;" resumed her lord, "but, whether the critic be lady or gentleman, the work must be allowed to reflect a mind of, originally, the happiest genius, and afterwards polished and set till it became a fascinating gem."

"We have lost some of Lord Byron's works, which I am led to suspect I need not, as a virtuous lady, be sorry for," continued Mrs. Drudge, "and we read and like him most in his earliest effusions."

"His college volume, madam?" I asked.

"No," answered Mr. Drudge, "that we have never seen, though it is sometimes good humoredly spoken of. Mrs. Drudge means the Giaour, the Corsair, and their family, and some of Childe Harold. We preserve, indeed, his tragedies, too; but, though they are fine things, regard them almost as the works of another man. There were, in fact, two or three Byrons, according as the first poet of that name became an admirer of different models and styles; for I suspect a good portion of his lordship's genius lay in happy adaptations of the essence of other poets; and even here, you see, I do not withhold the term genius, for, with Voltaire, I allow judicious imitation to be one of its best attributes. That apart, and leaving the college effusions as quite original, Byron wrote his Eastern Tales, because the Lady of the Lake had been written before them; Childe Harold was generated by a luxurious indulgence in Spenser; and Manfred was born after Faust, and while the first impression of that wonderful production irritated and fired his lordship's mind."

"Crabbe," said I, "is—"

"What a contemporary essayist* has stamped him," interrupted Mr. Drudge, "sometimes the Salvator, and sometimes the Teniers of poetry. So let us leave him as he is; a volume, or ten hours talk, could not define him better.

"The next of your list of names I shall take up is Moore." "You delight me," said I, "for while some people grumbled at the popularity of Moore, I always thought no contemporary poet had a sweeter fancy, or a purer feeling, while few equalled him in numbers and metre."

"We fully agree with you, recollecting, meantime, that these same perfections often ran into their own extremes, redundancy, prettiness, and sound," said Mr. Drudge.

"No enthusiasm is more real than Moore's, and not a poet trifles half so well," said his lady. "No man, or woman either, can send out his little winged conceits, the unique creations of his own brain; in fact, no one but Moore can make any thing of a mere conceit; and very often he bewitches, and strives to bewitch, with nothing else."

"He was never yet vulgar, nor 'mouthy,' nor puzzling," resumed the author, "nor heavy,

* Mr. Charles Butler.

flat, or dogmatical. He is not to be sure the eagle of poetry, soaring out of sight, and clutching the thunderbolts, nor any other great bird with wings as heavy and less power to use them."

"But he is the little lark of poetry, though," Mrs. Drudge went on, "for ever on the wing, for ever singing his sweet song, and for ever pleasing us with its repetition."

"No dramatist, however, and no painter from nature, either visible nature, or as she works under the veil of the human breast. He once attempted to be both, and failed. Moore lives with us in his Native Melodies, and not, with the exception, perhaps, of Paradise and the Peri, in his Lalla Rookh. The two longest poems in that volume are after-thoughts of his genuine mind, not half of them Moore; and they would never have been written, if his bookseller, or his purposes, had not set him to make money by a precedent. There is little human drama in the long speeches his ideal people hold together, and little nature in the highly wrought, and fiery, or frightful pictures or situations with which he has surrounded them. By a blessed coincidence, Westall was an illustrator of Moore's *pictures*. They were born for each other."

"And now," said I, "tell me something of Wordsworth and Coleridge."

Mr. Drudge looked down, played with his wine-glass, and smiled.

"Do you recollect any such poets, my dear?" politely endeavouring to fill up the pause, said Mrs. D.

"Does he recollect!" I repeated, "to be sure he does."

"Being something of a bibliophile, I *do* recollect, then. By a singular chance I possess a few very old volumes, attributed to gentlemen of the names you have mentioned; and I must say it is a pity they are not rather better known, if it were only for the curiosity of the thing. But the greatest pity is, that these authors seemed to have laboured all along for the profound obscurity into which they have at last fallen: or rather this eventual fate is no novelty to them, inasmuch as from the very first they were self-enveloped in it."

"In different ways, however," said I; "Wordsworth appeared obscure from choice; Coleridge in spite of himself: the one never intelligible but when he could not help it; the other never so, but as matter of chance; and I was therefore always better disposed towards the infatu-

ation of Coleridge, than towards what seemed to me the elaborate flirtation of Wordsworth."

"This criticism is too nice, perhaps too flippant, for me," bluntly rejoined my host; "but let that pass; I think we have now done with your list."

"Done with it, sir!—where is Madoc, and Joan of Arc, and Thalaba, and——"

"Enjoying all the pleasures of private retirement, I suppose: but stop—who wrote *The Last of the Goths?*"

"Aye, there you have it," said I, rubbing my hands.

"That poem," continued Mr. Drudge, "is perhaps the most manly specimen of the school, coterie rather, in which it was spun. It is, in fact, rational; and though an insult on our notions of literary *bienséance*, we have resolved to be very magnanimous, and admire it. It will do, I think."

"And poor Shelley was drowned," said I.

"Aye, Shelley; I was wrong just now; yes, he passed off too soon for us and for himself; as both would have benefited by the reformation that years and mature reflection must have wrought in his ostentatious intrusion of philoso-

phizing. How boyish all that was! to say the least of it."

"It was worse," said I, "indecorous."

"It was; though, in the familiar use of the word, not as positively so as some of the later rhymes of Shelley's noble friend, before discussed. We have exploded all that unnecessary, and self-degrading stuff. We do not, indeed, join in the 'common cry of curs' against every person who unhappily, yet conscientiously, differs from our established notions of morals and religion. We think it reasonable that, in a free country, any man may be allowed to try whatever theoretic voyage he pleases, decently; gravely, or wittily, but still, decently. We are ready to take up a book that shall seek, as some have sought, to dethrone and darken heaven itself, and for its bright existence to substitute a horrible non-entity. Let even this be assayed as it ought to be, and we can respect the man whom we believe sincere in his effort; but if it be attempted with scoff instead of argument; if our venerable belief, say prejudice, is to be approached with mockery and not with indulgence; if we are bandied upon our attributed weakness as a sottish wag would bandy,

no matter how brilliantly, his mistress or his grandmother; *fy donc!* Such a course can only demand our loathing and our chastisement."

"Apart from its philosophy, what is your opinion of Queen Mab?"

"Not flattering; we think it owed most of its notoriety to that very matter you wish me to overlook; which, after all, is but a metrical translation of the Freethinker's Catechism at the fag-end of Volney's Ruins. Smaller and later effusions of Shelley we admire more; and, indeed, consider some of them as exhibiting a mind of the very grandest poetical formation, with a command over language, in all its possible creations of full and deep sound, that excelled every cotemporary; nay, in our native tongue, perhaps every predecessor: though that is a bold word. Some passages in his Elegy on the death of his young friend, a Mr. Keats, I think, would finely illustrate what I say; but the surpassing proof I shall give of my assertion, is his scrap from Faust, which to me is almost the only poetry I have yet read that unites absolutely, and without pedantry, sound and sense. The passage in the original has been much admired for the same characteristics; I

know nothing of German; but if Goethe goes beyond his translator, he must be a wizard, not the greatest poet that ever lived; my eyes have swum, and my head grown dizzy, reading those lines; I shall recite them for you. Recollect, that Faust, the Devil, and a Will-o-the-wisp, alternately describe the illusions of Witchcraft in the Hartz Mountains.

" The limits of the sphere of dream,
The bounds of true and false, are past;
Lead us on, thou wandering Gleam,
Lead us onward, far and fast,
To the wide, the desert waste.'

But see how swift advance, and shift,
Trees behind trees, row by row;
How, clift by clift, rocks bend and lift
Their fawning foreheads as we go;
The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!
How they snort, and how they blow!

Through the mossy sods and stones,
Stream and streamlet hurry down—
A rushing throng—a sound of song,
Beneath the vault of heaven is blown!
Sweet notes of love, the speaking tones
Of this bright day, sent down to say

That Paradise on Earth is known,
Resound around, beneath, above.
All we hope, and all we love,
Finds a voice in this blithe strain,
Which wakens hill, and wood, and rill,
And vibrates far o'er field and vale,
And which echo, like the tale
Of old times, repeats again.

To whoo! to whoo! Near, nearer now,
The sound of song, the rushing throng!
Are the screech, the lapwing, and the jay,
All awake as if 'twere day!
See, with long legs and belly wide,
A salamander in the lake!
Every root is like a snake;
And along the loose-hill side,
With strange contortions through the night,
Curls, to seize or to affright;
And, animated, strong, and many,
They dart forth polypus-antennæ,
To blister with their poison spume
The wanderer. Through the dazzling gloom,
The many-coloured mice, that thread
The dewy turf beneath our tread,
In troops each other's motions cross,
Through the heath and through the moss;
And in legions intertangled,
The fire-flies flit, and swarm, and throng,

Till all the mountain depths are spangled.
Tell me, shall we go or stay?
Shall we onward? Come along!
Every thing around is swept
Forward, onward, far away!
Trees and masses intercept
The sight, and wisps on every side,
Are puffed up and multiplied."

"One thing, in the tenor of your discourse, strikes me as singular," said I, when Mr. Drudge had ended the recitation of these lines; "you seem to be of no politics in poetry; do you know that I have heard you criticise, impartially, Whigs and Tories?"

"Figs and blackberries! my good sir, what do I know of your old words? or what, in this time of good sense, should I know about them? Is the Muse a leading-article-writer? or must I treat her as such?

"Shall I, like Curtius, desperate in my zeal,
O'er head and ears plunge for the common-weal?
Or rob Rome's ancient geese of all their glories,
And cackling save the monarchy of Tories?"

"Don't be angry with me," said I, beginning to apprehend "the fiery quality" of the little man. "I assure you I only meant to offer my

congratulations on the decay of poetical politics, which in the age 'under notice,' very miserably abounded."

"And very ridiculously too, sir; but we have at last come to the resolution to read a metrical love-tale, or a sonnet to the Spring, without troubling our heads whether or not the author speechifies in or out of place; whether he attends the anniversary-dinner of Charley or Billy; whether he reads Tom Paine, or his Bible—in short, we are resolved not to make Parnassus a hustings; Apollo a committee orator, or a high-sheriff of the county; or to convert the Nine into a deputation of radical house-keepers, or a blue-stocking club of the ladies of cabinet-ministers."

CHAPTER VIII.

"*Sir Harry.* Who wrote Shakspeare?
My Lord Duke. Ben Jonson."

"AND in Heaven's name," said I, "what do you all think of Scott?"

"Do you mean our present Scott, author of the pretty pastorals, 'A Richmond Sunday,' or the old North Briton?" asked Mrs. Drudge.

I explained, and the lady continued.

"We admire a poem of his—The Lay;—yet, indeed, rather as a curious specimen of the excesses of the age, and as one of the remarkable departures from rule."

"But his novels, Mrs. Drudge?"

"None of them have reached us; I, at least have never heard of any."

"Not of Waverley and the rest?"

"Of Waverley, yes," said Mr. Drudge,—"though not as Scott's. But I remember;

there was, somehow, a blunder about the authorship of those books."

"Day and night, Mr. Drudge! it is not *he*, then?"

"Phu, phu—Tom Campbell; who left the solving of the mystery for his dying day. Let me see—yes—out of one hundred and seventy-six volumes, which up to the year 1844, Mr. Campbell accomplished, and in which year he died with a pen in his hand, just entering on the hundred and seventy-seventh book—about twenty volumes have found their immortal way to us. Still, perhaps, I shall shock you, by adding, that we admit most readily the imitative merits of Mr. Campbell: and like as well his models, Cid Hamet, Horace Walpole, Monk Lewis, Mrs. Radcliffe, and our old dramatists; the fashionable fury for the localities of his novels having abated, we now rest much of his claim on a skilful and happy combination of these writers."

"Cid, and Ben, and Fletcher, I subscribe to," said I, "but what shall we say of the others?"

"Generally, that, taken together, they supplied study for the hobgoblin or monstrous

machinery, and the superstitious interest of Mr. Campbell's tales; he ably disguised this, indeed, by adapting it to local gossip; but the force of my criticism is—that Horace Walpole's little crude tale is the first parent of all that wild legend in our language; that Lewis is its more fruitful propagator; and that Ann Radcliff is its first, and Mr. Campbell its last and most successful adaptor or modifier."

"But only recollect by what original agency—by what fine original characters—he has introduced and illustrated this portion of his novels," said I.

"Generally he has done so; not always: the very writers we have spoken of, now and then lend him an *original* character; for example, the gipsy witch, who meets the heroine and her aunt coming from church in *the Monk*, is the legitimate mother or grandmother of Meg, or of her stale sister, Norna. The imitation of her wild attire, of her gigantic stature, of her spells and devilry, and above all, of her rhymes, when she takes the girl's palm, is so obvious in both these offspring, that I can only wonder you have not before observed it."

"His drama, Mr. Drudge—Mrs. Drudge, his drama!"

"No better dramatist has ever lived; no dramatist more natural, forcible, and brilliant; and, sometimes more tiresome. To give us, at vast length, the vapid dialogue of every menial of every house, castle, cottage, or inn we enter with him, and of every subordinate character, when ten words would and ought to have conveyed the trifling fact wanted—this is a cruel exercise of ceded privilege."

"His humour at least is unexceptionable," I resumed.

"It was so," continued Mr. Drudge, "until after the lapse of about his fifteenth volume, when it became tinctured with a swaggering, sturdy kind of smartness, then in vogue, particularly among the wits of Mr. Campbell's native metropolis."

"It would be too late or too old to remark how often and how servilely or indifferently he has repeated himself," said Mrs. Drudge.

"Yes—a thousand before us have detected and pointed out this *qualem decet esse sororum*, among the men and women, situations, contrasts, and other means for effect in his endless Scotch books. Perhaps it was allowed to one man alone to repeat himself; I mean a man, who in

an introduction to one of those tales,* gallantly assumes juxta-position with—Shakspeare."

"I was hurt with that rather coxcomical piece of carelessness," said I; "and I believe we speak of the very book, in the title-page of which he informs his readers by motto—'that whenever he is particularly dull there is a motive at the bottom of it.' So there are pearls at the bottom of the ocean, and so would there be at the bottom of the horse-pond, if in ill-timed affectation, you flung them into it."

"At all events, the motto was an elegant impertinence," said Mr. Drudge, "no matter how recommended by previous success, or by chuckling security; and, arguing on your pretty figure, I would say that a writer should dive after his own gems, and not set us, unpractised as we are, upon the rather professional experiment. We do not dive for those we wear, though we are willing to pay well the skilful and courageous individual who saves us that task."

"Since we speak of the light prose of that time," I went on, "have you got such books as 'The Lights and Shadows,' and 'Margaret Lindsay?'"

* In the introduction to Peveril of the Peak.

"We have; they come to us with the vivid stamp of genius; 'genius in lace and tuckers, or else in a preaching-gown, indeed; but still the proper stuff," said Mr. Drudge.

"Yet *I* think them books too full of Scotch people, Scotch virtue, and Scotch cant," said his lady.

"There *was* a tone of praise-God-barebones morality, a sonorous and snuffling holding-forth, then resuscitated in Edinburgh, of which these volumes give us a good notion;" Mr. Drudge continued. "Henry Morton found Balfour with the Bible in one hand, and the Archbishop's sword in the other; and the author of Margaret Lindsay might have been caught napping with the sacred text chucked under his left arm, and the progressive MS. of his novel firmly wedged under his right. The people of that time, I suppose, scarcely allowed him to re-adapt their susceptibilities for the proper and elegant; although indeed, he seemed to engage in the task with sufficient austerity and self-importance."

"I did not myself relish the iteration of *the* Bible, and *her* Bible, and *his* Bible, and the ends and shreds of scripture phrases, that per-

vade the general language, as they do a report of 'Your Committee' at a 'Missionary Society,'" said I—"it appeared to me a trifling with the sacred volume; miserably out of place; and for that reason ridiculous as well as improper."

"The characters, good and evil, are almost all unnatural, and what they do, extravagant," resumed Mrs. Drudge. "I believe there never was, even in Scotland, such a woman as Margaret Lindsay. With her limited opportunities and early habits there certainly never was."

"Indeed my dear, the whole seems drawn from the author's refined imagination, and not from poor reality; and in this view, one page of the Vicar of Wakefield, or of his own Cottagers of Glenburnie, is worth any single volume he has produced," said Mr. Drudge; "even the *thees* and *thous* are part of a tissue of dapper affectation: and then he is not a dramatist, except so far as regards the stage-grouping of his characters: but he cannot make them talk; their discourse is ever twisted, and far-fetched, beyond patience."

"All his language goes on stilts," resumed the lady, who, for some cause I could not divine,

appeared especially hostile to the author:—"it is not the fine manly prose of Waverley; it is not prose at all. No easy and accomplished gentleman would speak it at an evening fire-side; yet this, I think, is the character of all the truly good novels I have ever read."

"Pray who committed these books?" I asked, now prepared for any correction in long-established opinion.

"A Scotch clergyman, and one who in his time, was a wondrous preacher, too—a Mr. Irving," answered my host.

I said nothing.

"But how different from his natural creature of a namesake!" exclaimed Mrs. Drudge.

"Geoffrey's superior in genius, after all, though behind him in attained ease and taste, and a feeling of what he was about," said Mr. Drudge; "but let us talk of light prose writers of another cast. We recognise William Hazlitt of that age."

"Do you so? let me hear all about him."

"Why, he is an odd, whimsical, uneven writer, sometimes as startling, and sometimes as laughable as Rousseau; who by the way was his model; so much the worse for Willy. Hazlitt

97610

says the best things and the worst, in the best and worst manner; he is at one time deeper, and at another not so deep, as he thinks he is; he finds out some fine large truth, but has not arms to encircle it, or hands to grasp it; or while he is happily proceeding to set it down before us, some strange, or trifling, or lack-a-daisical whim flutters before his eyes, which he must catch or run after. In fact, we do not know what to make of him, yet we like him."

"Have you preserved his last book?"

"How do you call it?"

"The new—Pygmalion."

"Never heard of it before."

"I'm glad of it, for his own sake. You read the Opium-eater and Elia?"

"Yes, and no."

"What! not the man whose epithets were so like Sterne?"

"We scarcely read Sterne himself."

"Does Ugo Foscolo swim down?"

"He does, though his *Quarterly articles* were routed sixty years ago; nor has his adoption of Sade's theory of the identity of Laura much recommended him to us: for the note in the manuscript Virgil, and the sonnet in the tomb of the

Cordeliers are now approved impositions; one by Petrarch himself, the other by his old commentator, Filelfo."

"I am not sorry for that," said I, "and now I can love Sade because he was only silly, or a fabricator, while I detested him when I feared he spoke truth. Petrarch told us enough of his Laura—for his purposes, for ours, for the purposes of poetry, enough. More would have been too much. Imagination, to remain excited, must never be gratified: like passion, it dies in experience."

"You are right, sir," said my hostess. "The sweetest of poets, the most amiable of men, was at prayers in a fine old church, and there saw a face and form, a mien and character, that, as unwilled but irresistible dreams do, occupied his soul. His conception of that radiant creature was made up of a part of every thing around him. On the burst of the organ, on the swell of the hymn, amid the odour of incense, and the depth of sacrifice, Laura took eternal possession of the mind, the heart, the existence of the poet. This was his impression of his mistress; this was all *he* told us of her; why compel us to know more?"

"Why, but that a fat Abbé, wishing to gratify his own vanity, undertook to prove that Laura, even when Petrarch first met her, was a married woman, the mother of many children, and lawful wife to a Mr. Hugh Sade?" said Mr. Drudge.

"And then the dream vanished, the delightful dream of some six generations of an adoring and credulous world! The little Abbé's gross touch dissolved it into thin air; Laura was no more; and behind the illusive form of light and grace to which we had hitherto given that appellation, we beheld a sober matron; and, notwithstanding the Abbé's '*passion honnête*,' a flirting matron. Mrs. Hugh Sade! Foh!—it might as well have been Mrs. Hugh Higginbotham."

"And so you remember Ugo?" said I.

"Why yes: there was a kind of illegitimate interest about the doubt of his local or national claims to literature, that did much for him; his eternal, though indirect stretchings after parallels between himself and a man that told as much truth, Dante, was also useful. He lives with us in his Ortis, which we consider a good imitation of Goethe."

"His English book—the Essays?"

"We regard as a compound of the force of natural power and the weakness of artificial enthusiasm; it has come from a clever man, who tried to swell himself out into something cleverer than he was; to make an ostentation of feelings and high mindedness to which he was callous; to humbug, in fact. I speak on the internal evidence of the book."

"Indeed," said I, "I never thought it an English book: it was not real, honest enough; and I believe, that even in the day it came out, it proved rather late for the simplified character and taste of our literature. Poor Ugo!—What became of him? did he die a natural death?

"A natural death! why do you think he grew bad enough for a New-gate of going?"

"No; he was, at all events, too cunning for that; but I know he had a propensity, that is, when hard pressed, he always said he had—to emulate the last act of his own Ortis."

"Did any one believe him?"

"Do you mean in that particular assertion?"

"In any assertion."

"I don't exactly know, indeed.—But he went off easily, in England?"

"He is said to sleep the long sleep in a little yellow-clay garden on the banks of the Regent's canal yonder, between the two pretty and reputable chamber-maids that some Italian traveller* of his day mentions, rather remarkably."

"And with the following lines from Moore scribbled near him," said Mrs. D.

"Out on the craft!—I'd rather be
One of those hinds that round me tread,
With just enough of sense to see
The noon-day sun that's o'er my head,
Than thus, with high-built genius curst,
That hath no heart for its foundation,
Be all, at once, that's brightest, worst,
Sublimest, meanest, in creation!"

"Lady Morgan is still known to us," said Mrs. Drudge, "as a female thinker of much force and imagination; with her politics and morals I have nothing to do, as I happen to outlive the one, and, after all the gossip of her age, never find myself hurt or offended by the at least decorous manifestation of the other."

"No doubt," said Mr. D. "the lady had a manly mind—I decline the term masculine, or

* Count Pecchio.

else I prefer this." We shall say little of Lady Morgan's mechanical wants in style, since she has, herself, properly, and indeed in a disarming way, admitted them. But there is a womanly affectation, if not parade, about her, that is the worst. It is common, however, to all Lady-writers I have ever met, although developed in very different ways; and perhaps a lordly critic should make allowance for it, out of the imperfect system of female education of her age, and when he considers how comparatively self-taught and self-guided a lady-author must then have necessarily been. Woman, left to herself, will always be woman. Say you not so, Mrs. Drudge?"

I resumed—"I have seen, in some old chronicles of about 1824, the first announcement of a work, called, I think, Sayings and Doings:—did it hit?"

"It has hit us, at a good measured distance, and we estimate it as a book of pure style and taste, with a characteristic ease and quietness, the sure indications of well-balanced and experienced talent. Adam Blair and Galt's facetious one-volume novels also survive. And now I am tired of this one topic, and absolutely refuse to answer or listen to another question on it. If

among poets or prose-people, I have omitted any consecrated to your foreign prejudices or likings, do not blame me for an oversight that the fiat of time makes imperative; and do not blame time either, when you call to mind the testimony you have yourself given of the unhappy auspices under which many first-rate geniuses of your favourite age struggled for an appearance, even before their cotemporary world. No doubt that great scramble you have so well described has caused to us the loss of just as much excellence as we have rescued from it. The market was overstocked, sir, and many a load of the prime article returned from it unpurchased, nay, unlooked at, and without a bidder, simply because it was too late on the ground. Genius must be rare, as well as perfect, to command an interest or a sale. Much depends on this. The diamond itself, if drawn or driven to market—and if the accident were possible—as quarry-stones are, would sink in estimation, if not in value, and sometimes lack a purchaser."

The readiness and brisk tone of the criticisms contained in the foregoing discourses often startled and struck me as a jot too free, until I re-

collected the remoteness, from the time and individuals discussed, of the critic; as to the more scandalous portion of it, Mrs. Drudge's tea-equipage had been introduced before a word of that escaped any of us. But whatever might have been my early and accompanying impression of Mr. Drudge's power, right, indeed, to pass a rational opinion upon any thing he had so easily undertaken to adjust, it was considerably staggered towards the close of the evening, when, notwithstanding his own previous proposal to abstain from the topic, he once more renewed a comparison between the literary spirit and genius of his own age, and that in which I now write. On this occasion, he and Mrs. Drudge had all the learning of the colloquy to themselves.

"Is it not truly surprising, my love," said the lady, "that in all their lighter pieces, those poets should have laboured to invent an arbitrary mechanism of their own, instead of using the established one that high authority had almost hallowed, and that lay ready to their hand?"

"Yes, my love," said Mr. Drudge, "and when it existed in such endless variety as most aptly and rationally to suit any species of senti-

ment or composition? There were, pastoral, bucolic, elegiac, and lyric; the latter comprehending ode, sonnet, song, and epithalamium"—

"And then such models of these different classes, love!"

"Yes, love; Theocritus, Horace, Tibullus, Ovid, Propertius, Catullus, and so forth, among the ancients."

"Or Malherbe, Petrarch, Camoens, Hammond, Donne, Suckling, and so forth, among the moderns."

"They would have found pastoral the best possible conduit for the soft and simple; exuberant imagination would have been properly restrained in elegy, which admits but of one thought on a given subject, love."

"While lyric presented every vivacity of change, taking care, however, that each stanza contained a set number of lines; each line a set number of words; and that no two stanzas shewed the slightest connexion of idea, my dear."

"And you have not mentioned the important distinction between lyric and iambic, so clearly made out by Quintilian, and so elaborately supported by Dacier, love."

"The finical pedantry of Mr. Walsh, Dan

Pope's first Mæcenas, coolly recited in the year of our Lord 2023!" said I to myself.

"But what do you think?" continued Mr. Drudge, querulously turning to me; "two poems, altogether unnoticed in that age, we have reprinted, and now estimate as they merit?"

"The City of the Plague, one?" I asked.

"Alfred, and Cœur de Lion; two epics, by Pye and Anna Pordon, the only sane productions of the time."

"You should have put the lady first, my love," said Mrs. Drudge.

"No doubt, my dear, in point of genius and good poetry; but Pye has the advantage of choosing a subject untouched in the epic way, before him; whereas, upwards of two hundred years ere Anna was born, that is, in 1509, appeared 'Richarde Cœur de Lyon,' printed by W. de Worde. Again, however, she is superior to the old poet in having rejected the historical character supplied to Richard, and given him one according to rule, whereby he is pious, gentle, and constant to his wife; and altogether an epic hero. The want of skill of her predecessor is apparent in a few lines I remember. During the siege of Acre, Richard gets sick, longs for pork, and cannot procure any. A

knight goes privately to the steward, and tells him to keep counsel and

> " Take a sarasyne yonge and fat,
> And in haste that deed be slawe,
> And his head of him he fawe."

The steward acts on this hint: the Saracen is served up as pork to the king, who eats faster than his carver can supply him; goes to bed, and next morning awakes in rude health. When afterwards aware of the deception, he thus expresses his content:

> " Kynge Richard sayd, I you wraunt
> There is no flesh so nouryssaunt
> To none Englysshe crysten man,
> Partryche, heron, fessaunt, ne swan,
> Cowe, ne oxe, shepe, ne swan,
> Than is the flesh of a saracyne."

CHAPTER IX.

"I have abused the king's *press* most damnably."
JACK FALSTAFF.

"How many periodicals have you?" said I.

"By act of parliament, three. *There* was another curse of the age we have so often alluded to, and one other slow but sure rot in its literature. Every periodical, great and small, had its own friends, and its own coterie, or its own political opinions, and, right or wrong, mawkish or extravagant, as innovators might have been, they were partially deified, and their literary opposites run down in the same breath: and thus a most dangerous jumble of tastes frittered away the public mind, until puzzle begat languor, and languor indifference, and both an utter neglect of every new book and author."

"It seems to me," I continued, "that in another view, periodicals must have produced the

decay you speak of. A small volume of poetry costs five shillings, and it will contain the bad as well as the good of an author; and you thus purchase his errors and slips, which you don't exactly want, along with his brilliant bits and savoury passages. Behold, on the other hand, a grand army of reviews, of all shapes and prices, from five shillings down to fourpence, in many of which was to be had the cream of from five to five-and-twenty authors together, carefully skimmed for your sipping palate, and ready for use at your tea or coffee in the morning. Moreover, you bought ready-made opinion for your money, a few shillings or pence, as it might be, and so were saved the trouble of forming your own. And what man or miss in his or her senses might be expected to pay a great deal for so little, when, with a little, he or she could have the great deal?"

"No one did so," said Mr. Drudge: "the 'reading public' rested satisfied with periodicals alone, and the author was left on the publisher's shelf. Of course no author would continue to write for the profit of other persons only; so the pen was at last totally abandoned, and the sole comfort resulting to authors was, to see

their monstrous tyrant, the periodical press, sharing with themselves a common ruin and oblivion."

"The periodical press!" I exclaimed—"truly, sir, it was a species of steam-loom, or threshing or winnowing-machine, that, with its short methods and unnatural despatch, threw thousands of honest people out of bread."

"I wonder," said Mrs. Drudge, "they never rose out against it, as, about the same time, the indignant trades, weavers, and spinners, and carders, rose out against the mechanical encroachments, monopoly indeed, of Manchester, Glasgow, and other manufacturing places.—Surely, if the great body of authors were united, (but that was, in itself, rather a difficulty), one night would have been sufficient for the demolition of all the periodical presses in London and Auld Reekie."

"Or I should have chosen a more legal proceeding," said Mr. Drudge. "It is my fixed opinion that a good action—Authors *v.* Reviewers—might have been made out, to go, for damages, to a special jury, in King's Bench. I think an author might have crippled them in a thumping verdict, not on account of their de-

famatory praise or censure, but on account of their piratical quotations. Where was their right to republish, without end, the best part of a man's book? Was it not as black piracy as if the promulgators of the sixpenny Cain did so, without any dull or prattling remark at the head, the tail, or between the passages?"

"Here is a curious little book, that, among other curious things, gives us some notion of the views entertained by applicants for employment to a periodical editor, of their self-measured fitness for the office," resumed Mrs. Drudge; "shall I read from it a letter found among the papers of a gentleman, who, it would seem, once swayed a miscellaneous periodical of the time?

"*To the Editor of the Universal and Multifarious Magazine.*

"Sir,

"Being at present disengaged, I have no objection to tender my services for the advantage of your respectable journal. I do not much care into what department you may put me, as I think I shall be found fit enough for any. Indeed, if agreeable to you, I should ra-

ther like to do, now and then, a little on every topic. I write essays off-hand on all subjects. I am particularly liable to be struck with the minutest errors of a literary work, and particularly slow at comprehending what an author means by a beauty: hence you can estimate my capacity for your review sheet. By the help of a lexicon, and a friend of mine, a young Cantab, I scruple not to say I should be quite competent to detect the bad orthography of a Greek quotation; and, should an error happen, you know we could lay it either on the author or the printer, as might suit our convenience. I make poetry, myself, on one leg, so you cannot doubt my capacity to be a flogger and mangler of all new poems, particularly the successful ones. By the way of poetry, I have a large blue book of original sonnets, odes, &c. lying by me, with which I shall be happy to harmonize your last sheet, on reasonable terms; but I wish it to be understood, that they must go in at double the rate of my prose contributions.

"Send me to the King's Theatre, if you like: I am no great adept myself, nor indeed can I boast a good ear, and in honest truth have ne-

ver heard an Italian song; but a musical dictionary is within my reach; a dear friend of mine frequents the opera: so I could manage a brisk technical paragraph for you. Of the drama I ought to know something: I have trod the boards myself, before now; and since then have written a play which would have astonished the town, if the silly managers had produced it. So don't spare me at Drury Lane or Covent Garden.

"But I request one department entirely to myself—the fine arts: for although I know little of the matter, my brother is an artist of long standing; his pictures have been twice turned out of Somerset House, and he promises to furnish me with critiques on the works of the council, and particularly of the hanging committee. As to the rest, I know no subject more easily handled by a writer completely ignorant of it. Only compile a list of painters' names, and the cant of the painting room; boldly arraign Sir Joshua's lectures; compare pictures and styles that may be as antagonist as north and south; slip in such terms as glazing, and scumbling, and toning, and keeping; conclude

by saying your kettle is singing to make whiskey punch, and the thing is done.

HORACE HANDY.

"P. S. Regarding the tragedy I spoke of, you can have it, in detached scenes, for your poetical purposes; but at something higher than we may agree on for the sonnets, as the measure of the verse is necessarily heroic, and a page of it would make considerably more."

"Do you think," said I, "the public will ever guess how they are humbugged?"

"If this was the way in which these things were managed,—" Mrs. Drudge went on—

"We must not decide that it was," interrupted Mr. Drudge: "in the case of this particular letter it is to be asked, whether or not the editor paid it attention; and at all events, the two-penny post was open to every applicant or intermeddler, and from its incessant raking no editor could shield himself. If you turn over a few pages of the very book you hold in your hand, you will find another document, that rouses our pity for the editorial people of 1823—4. It is in the form of a regular article, ad-

dressed, when it was first written, to the readers of, I believe, the same periodical, namely, the Universal and Multifarious Magazine."

"I have it," said Mrs. Drudge,—and thereupon the lady politely resumed her reading aloud.

"Since the death of the artist who hung out his pictures in the market-place, none but editors know what editors suffer from the eternal hedge-fire of the twopenny post.

"If you unscrew the breech out of a gun-barrel, charge it with a soft clay ball, apply the end to your mouth, and give a smart phu! you can (that is, a practised marksman can) hit any object at a given distance, and if it be an animal, with certain surprise and irritation to the master sense of feeling. Such pranks are played by youth, and ourselves remember a case in point.

"There was an old jew-pedlar in our native village, who sold bits and scraps of almost 'all waires in this world contayned;' his shop was in the open air, protected from spoliation only by his own vigilance and the eye of heaven; or when it rained, snowed, or sleeted, mayhap he

hoisted an awning, curiously constructed with old canvas strained upon hoops. Isaac was a standing butt for all our practical jokes; he bore them, however, with a bad grace, growling and muttering, and invoking father Abraham to let slip the seven plagues on his impish persecutors. The patriarch did not interfere, and Isaac adopted secondary means for revenge, complaining of many offenders to their fathers, mothers, and schoolmasters. And behold, open war resulted. His enemies took the field with some twenty stands of arms, such as before described, and Isaac's peace was clear gone.

"As he stood rubbing his hands, and placidly looking on his goodly display of nick-nacks, an invisible power smote him briskly on the back of the head: he turned, and was hit again behind; he turned round and round in every direction, and at every change was he hit and hit; and as Isaac could not see his foes, nor conceive the means by which he was thus tantalized, he had nothing but witchcraft for it, and he deemed that evil spirits waged war against him for his very honesty.

"We are Isaac, and the twopenny post is the

masked battery of clay-balls. We are hit as often and as smartly as Isaac was, by we don't know whom, and, God he sees, for we don't know what. As we stand in *this* position, one soft billet smacks us for not standing in the other; a second hits us for having changed place; a third cracks at us for not standing in three places *together*. Should we rub our hands in imaginary comfort, as Isaac did, pop it comes from behind; should we turn, pop it comes again, behind and before; and should we venture to expostulate, why then it is worse than ever—nothing but pop, pop, pop.

"Many esteemed correspondents we have; but there is Mr. Cross-sticks, and Mr. Cross-bones, Mr. Snarl, and Mr. Cavil, Mr. Tweezer, and Mr. Sneezer, Mr. Bob Short, and Mr. Tom Tall, Mr. Flibbertigibbet, and Mr. Tippettywitchet, not forgetting Messrs. Criss-cross, A. B. C., and so on, to X. Y. Z., together with numerous other gentlemen of equally interesting nomenclature; and what with the ever opposite hints and doctrines these respectable persons inculcate, and the irritation of their strange names in our ears, we protest that our brains are

turned inside out, our pleasant self-confidence destroyed, and our laudable hopes reduced to utter despondency.

"This moment we sit down to settle accounts with correspondents:—we pull out a drawer crammed with a chaos of opinions, each doomed to eternal discordance with the other; we start, we turn pale, we sink in our easy chair, petrified with the consciousness of our inability to perform a task that two hundred and twenty good people expect, with open mouths, at our hands. We cannot answer them—perhaps they may answer themselves; let us try:—

"Sir,

"Why not explode the short and frivolous essays, and substitute a few serious scientific disquisitions?

"PARALLELOGRAM."

Sir,

"As your sincere friend, allow me to observe, that the original matter is generally of too sombre a cast.

"SAM. SPUNK."

"Sir,

"Couldn't you supply more illustrative quotation? More of the old Greek and Roman stuff?

"Hic."

"Mr. Editor,

"Sir,

"Buy you for your cheapness; but when you send me Latin, or such like, what is it but money thrown away? Think plain English might serve, or else can't you get a handy lad to discount and give us the ready?

"Luke Ledger."

"Sir,

"Your reviews come to the book too soon; you know the good old plan—four pages to yourself, and half a one to the author. Be advised; array every thing you know or don't know, before an adventurer's eyes, ere you deign to pick him up between your critical finger and thumb.

"Simon Stretch."

"Sir,

"A well-wisher may tell you, that so far as the trade is concerned, *we* only want you to say whether a book is worth purchasing or not."

"OLIVER OCTAVO."

"Sir,

"In your last review of Mr.——'s —— the proper name was spelled with two p's, and after the word 'rosebud,' in second column, there was a colon instead of a semicolon. Before this, you have accused others of error; what can you now say for yourself?

"NO AUTHOR."

"Sir.

"Last U. M. M. did not *open* sprightly. Articles all too long, and only three *headings* in two pages. You should make it *look* well. Always bring a new head into the middle of a column, and never *run* an article beyond two, at the very outside. When *I take a mag. between my hands*, I can, at the turn of my eye, tell how it will *do*: if it has plenty of the *space-lines* and *capitals* running across, I say at once, *that's the thing.*

"ONE OF YOUR VENDERS."

"Sir,

"You address the many—and of what use, therefore, are your heavy fine arts criticisms?

"PETER PLAINWAY."

"Sir,

"I read your fine arts essay with much pleasure, but do you think they sufficiently vary and extend so highly important a subject?

"SAM SKETCH."

"But these fine arts are like to bring us into real trouble.

"Sir,

"You *go* your fine arts on us every day—every *fancy* but the *real thing*—why don't you *stand up to the scratch?* Why do you *shy* that? Mind your *hits*, and no more *fibbing*.

Yours as you treat us,

"BOB BREAKRIB.

"P. S. I knows you well: you're a little fellow with a brown wig and a small hat, comes out of ——'s court, every day at four."

"To provide against the possible recurrence of such ruin as periodicals once inflicted on li-

terature," Mr. Drudge resumed, after his lady had done reading, "parliament has, as I informed you, taken the matter into it's own hands, allowing us but three periodicals, and even those at such a price, that perhaps not two out of fifty can afford to look into them."

"Three for London, I suppose, Mr. Drudge?"

"For the united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; two in London, and one in Edinburgh. Lately, indeed, the literary people of Dublin have sent in a petition for another, among themselves; but it is not thought that much can come of it. 'The Spectator Revived' is the name of the Scotch work, and it has the fame of being the mildest, most classic, and most useful ephemeral of the day. Very often it devotes its pages to criticisms of distinguished men of every side, both as men and as public characters; and the amiable impartiality of those sketches is deservedly admired. But have you been to the theatre yet?"

I truly replied in the negative; whereupon, Mr. and Mrs. Drudge offering to accompany me, we adjourned thither.

CHAPTER X.

"I thank your worship for your good counsel; but I shall follow it as the flesh and fortune shall better determine."

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

"Gentlemen," said the Cavalier, smiling, "I have seen you so much charmed with your actors, that I ought not to be so bold as to signify my dissent from your opinions."

GIL BLAS, BOOK II. CHAP. VIII.

"Is he not a great actor? an original!" "Very original," replied the critic: "his cadence is quite peculiar, and his tones abundantly sharp; he almost always deserts nature; hurries over the words that contain the sentiment, and places the emphasis where he should not, making pauses on articles and conjunctions. He diverted me very much; never was grief more comically expressed."

THE SAME.

I FOUND the Theatre Royal rather a smaller one than I had been accustomed to frequent. It also differed, in the solemnity of its interior architecture, the simplicity of its ornaments, and the subdued light of its audience parts, from the Theatres Royal of 1823. The audience itself was composed of serious, in-ear-

nest looking people, who appeared as if they came to witness the performance. I saw those who arrived late, steal on tip-toe to their seats, cautiously shutting the doors after them; and I learned with as much surprise as pleasure, that a virtuous lady, maid or wife, might now sit unmolested, and unshocked or uninjured, in the second tier of boxes. And this minds me of a letter I received from my youngest sister, two or three years before the date of my present writing, which shews, I think, to what miscalculations the then state of our public theatres subjected the inexperienced ladies that visited them. My mother and sister, after only a few days' residence in town, went to enjoy a fine tragedy, unprotected, save by a little boy, a cousin, and from the country like themselves. The reason of their being so peculiarly alone was this; they had come up at the invitation of a fashionable relative, who, in the space between his letter and their arrival, was hurried to Scotland, to attend the death-bed of his lady's father, and could only leave a note, advising them of the time of his probable return, for which they waited; but, knowing no other family or individual in London, they remained,

in course, not only unprotected, but without initiation into one of the mysteries or riddles of public places. I make an extract from my sister's letter, exactly, as, under these circumstances, it was written to me; hoping I have sufficiently explained, to account for its unguarded simplicity.

"My dear Arthur,

"So we went only with little Charles, our landlady assuring us we might do so; and, indeed, I thought nothing of it, when I reflected on the high characters of the managing committees of the great theatres, and naturally assured myself, what pains they must take, as gentlemen, and as guardians of their public visitors, to protect us from intruders of any disagreeable kind.

"Not choosing to dress, we occupied a front seat in the second tier of boxes, and for some time were quite alone. Towards the end of the play, however, the box-door flew respectfully open, and a group of elegant women entered; at that late hour from a private party, I suppose, and filled nearly all the seats behind us.

They talked rather loud, but with exceeding taste, upon the merits of the play and performers, and occasionally, will you believe it? not over mysteriously of some delicate little affairs of their own. Mamma whispered me a remark upon the fashionable ease of their manner, and particularly pointed my attention to a languishing beauty, in full dress, whom I thought the most engaging as well as most lovely creature I had ever beheld. Our little beau was caught by this lady looking wistfully at an orange in her hand, and immediately she presented him with it. For this mamma thanked her, awkwardly enough, indeed, and thereupon we all became free in a moment. I could observe poor mamma not a little flattered at the condescending attention of our fine new friends; now and then she looked round to note the general, and I thought envious admiration directed towards our box; and I own I felt proud, myself, that our manner and appearance had not been thought unworthy of such politeness.

In a little time several gentlemen of their acquaintance joined our ladies, and were received by them in the most winning way. Without much affectation, and urged on by mamma's

winks and whisperings, and treading on my toes, as well as by my own taste, I think I succeeded, a little, in adapting my prim manner to the circle around us; and this was not without its effect: a handsome gentleman, and whom I afterwards found to be most intelligent, stept over the seats and got immediately behind me; and then, *sans ceremonie*, began a conversation, in the course of which, I have an idea, I was spirited. I must acknowledge, however, that the man made somewhat too free in his soft things at my ear, and I'm afraid I ought to have checked him once or twice; for my heart, and my early notions of womanly decorum, whisper, that even to become irresistible, one should not become—I know not what. I have some misgivings, too, as to the propriety of allusions and titters that were barely suppressed among the rest of our company. Quite sure I am, that our good curate, Mr. Hoadly, would severely reprehend them; nay, I can well recollect the time that poor mamma herself lectured me strictly against listening to things, that on the present occasion she heard, (for she must have heard them), without the slightest gravity of face or contraction of brow. My own settled opinion is, that while I gene-

rally improve myself by copying the fashionable airs of London ladies, in public. I shall never, never adopt their license of speech. To go on.

"Between the play and farce, we joined our new friends, in walking through the lobbies and saloons; and now, my dear brother, I can give you no idea of the crowds of gay beauties and handsome fellows, no idea of the mirrors that reflected them over and over again, and multiplied every glance, and smile, and motion, into treble its first effort. I had my gentleman at my elbow, I promise you, and he was quite good-humoured, and got us refreshments and things. But our pleasure was interrupted by some rude speech, from some rude person, to mamma, at which she reddened, and stammered, and scolded aside at him, and then hurried me out of the theatre. What the person said I have vainly endeavoured to learn, as mamma will answer no question on the subject; only, when I speak to her, she seems agitated, turns up her eyes, and remarks that London is a wicked place."

But passing to the stage of 2023—4, I was forcibly struck, when the curtain drew up and

the principal actors made their appearance, with a great difference between their style and that of the performers I had been used to admire. Indeed, the contrast became disagreeable, and I did not fail to observe to Mr. Drudge that I thought his British actors rather deficient in the "ruggedness," the "electric points" and "tremendous explosions," and "the rapid transitions" of nature. I allowed, meantime, abundance of propriety and ease in their manner, and confessed myself really pleased with a certain modest bearing about them, that even on the stage seemed to recognize the presence of the great public by whom they existed, and to whose judgment they were amenable.

Mr. Drudge did not, in the house, reply to any of my observations; but civilly insisting on my returning with him home to supper, afterwards treated the subject of theatricals at some length. He presumed my taste for acting had been formed on the continent, where he understood the old school still boasted its disciples and admirers: as, after Talma's day, our mountebank tricks became fashionable in Paris, and, Mr. Drudge supposed, still remained so.

"I heard you talk, my good sir, of rugged-

ness, and points, and explosions, and transitions, and thus get a clue to your taste," Mr. Drudge said; "but, sir, we no longer permit ourselves to be jarred with the ruggedness, nor bored with the points, nor blown up in the explosions, nor whirled about in the transitions. We consider, with Bottom, that you 'can do all that extempore, as it is nothing but roaring.' Forty years at least have elapsed since I saw the last mumming exhibition in this way. It was in a barn on the coast of Cornwall; and may I ever forget, though then almost a child, the tall fellow in buckram, as he scowled, and started, and growled about the place?

"Sir, coming back to the principle and feeling of John Kemble's acting, which even during the rival reign of fits and starts, and screamings and mumblings, was reputably and honorably preserved by Young, we labour to improve, if possible, his manly vigour and pervading good sense. We think it a comfort to look for the evening at an actor who, we are pretty sure, will not make a fool of himself; we are content to surrender ourselves to the gradual expansion of a whole effect, rather than put our eyes and brains on the rack, after a point or a bounce; we

will not tolerate, for an hour, rant, or fustian, or childish silliness, that, for a minute, we may get startled, or frightened, or thrown into an unnecessary cold sweat. We cannot understand your straining and beating after nature: nature does not lurk under cover, nor in a bush or thicket, like hares or foxes; she does not require to be ingeniously and laboriously unearthed and started; she is not rare game, and it will never do to hunt her down; she leads, and not eludes pursuit; nay, she beckons to follow quietly, rather than provokes to hot pursuit of any kind. Being like nature is one thing; being more natural than nature is another thing. A lady once said of the drawing of a lady's artist, Mr. Glover, that it *was* more natural than nature. In fact, sir, it is now ruled, that an actor who attempts to mutter his words, or speak through his nose, or down in his abdomen, or to deal in any such sleights of ventriloquism, for the purpose of at last letting himself out as a volcano or an earthquake, shall instantly be withdrawn from the public eye."

"Blasphemy!" said I; "do you aim this at Kean?"

"No. In the present age we can form our

opinion of Kean only from that of the last, unbiassed writers of his own, and they instruct us to regard him, as an actor, with much respect. For his very peculiarities they give him the exculpating praise of being natural in his own conception; of not jumping out of himself to run after, or worry them down. Apart from uniqueness, they consider his general merits of a very high order. His occasional declamation is said to have been always vigorous, and often harmonious to a fascinating degree; and it is added, that no man excelled him in true pathos and tenderness, and, when he liked, delicacy. Kean is, however, indirectly visited with censure for what was no fault of his, and what he could not have prevented—namely, the bombastic train of imitators, who, in various modified ways, appeared after him, each, in turn, enjoying a little false sunshine of public favour, and gradually starting farther from feeling and taste, until they at last ended in such exhibitions as I have told you I encountered some forty years ago."

"There was a brother of your favourite, John Kemble," I resumed, "who, while he held a respectable place in tragedy, was, I believe, the

hero of the higher comedy of that time—do you hear of him?"

"Yes; and from all we can collect of his fine comic style, I think you may see a continuation of it to-morrow night, at our theatre. At least, what he was esteemed for, we also admire—gallantry, manliness, and gentlemanly though rich humour."

"Does Liston's vein still set the house in a roar?"

"Liston?—let me see. Oh! I believe I have read some old criticism on an actor of that name; but if we mean the same person, I answer no to your interrogatory. The Liston I suppose you allude to is described—"

"As a performer, for whose entrance, only, the audience volunteered their heartiest laugh. He did not," I continued, growing enthusiastic, "he did not require to open his mouth in order to compel the extension of the mouths of thousands, old and young, gentle and simple: he operated, in fact, like a bag of the laughing-gas, and was the most successful disturber I have ever known of the conceited, or habitual, or stupid gravity of your countrymen."

"Pshaw! yes. My abstract idea of Liston is all face; I get before me a gross, caricature face, such as we see in the magic-lantern, entering on the stage, and by dint of unmeaning, grotesque, and let us hope unnatural distortions of feature, producing the vulgar effect you rather too anxiously detail. It was not acting; it was not conceiving, or speaking, or even *looking* a character from nature. The people laughed, not at a skilful and happy imitation of the farce of life, but rather at something—they scarcely knew what—of which they had imagined nothing before, because nothing they ever saw could supply them with it. It was not Launcelot, it was not Tony, it was not the Bailie; it was Liston—no, not even Liston! *it was Liston's face. We* allow no such disagreeable encroachments on the legitimate humour, even of farce, but make it take its place in a modified form, indeed, among the groups of the Christmas pantomime."

"But you allow *that* to continue?" I exclaimed; "surely there cannot be a greater outrage on the drama."

"How can it outrage what it has nothing to do with? We preserve it, nay, are delighted

with it, not as any part of the drama, but as 'itself alone;' and as a sovereign unbender of all melancholy adjustment of the muscles about the mouth. I have objected to grimace, not on its own account, but on account of the particular instance in which it foisted itself, under an usurped character, upon the easy taste of an audience—sometimes never to be pleased, sometimes 'tickled with a straw,' and always arbitrary and unaccountable. I swear they would have suffered a clever humbug to 'stick them in the earth, and bowl them to death with turnips.'

"Was Grimaldi a man of genius?

"Was he?—he was, and *is*: for, we too, enjoy our Joe, the fifth or sixth lineal descendant from the greatest of the name, in the days we speak of, and it must be conceded, his equal, at least. Genius!—aye, and of the most original genius. They may talk of their new styles of acting and writing; but Kean himself could not have been so perfectly original; and, among writers, Cobbett is the only man fit to run parallel with our prince of the grotesque and inconceivable. Grimaldi's visage is four volumes of broad grins; and the irresistibly ludicrous plays through every line of his motions and at-

titudes, as grace and beauty play through the antique. Bless your heart! we have him still. So soon as merry Christmas comes, all the little boys who spend the long-calculated holidays with their friends, and away, at last, from the iron chime of school-bells, that enforce systematic lying down and rising up, all bless Grimaldi's name, and throng to laugh at him and with him. And long may he reign over our Christmas merriment! for he is the true sovereign clown of them all, and no man dares dispute his empire. Oh yes! buffoonery by all means, but not in Shakspeare—we take good care of that."

"Gramercy!" said I, "but you speak it well, as if the public voice were grown, of a sudden, quite omnipotent ——————"

CHAPTER XI.

"How much do you take per month?" "Four double pistoles," answered the dancing-master, "is the current price, and *I give but two lessons per week.*"—"Four doubloons a month!" said I, "that's a great deal." "How! a great deal?" replied he, with an air of astonishment—"You would give a pistole a month to a master of philosophy."

GIL BLAS, BOOK XII. CHAP. V.

"What's the cause of thunder?"

LEAR.

"AND so it is," said Mr. Drudge; "because long ago a national dramatic taste became thoroughly formed, fixed ideas on all theatrical subjects was the natural consequence.

"Had we Kean now among us, we should make him, in addition to his professional importance, a very bidable and interesting little man in other respects.

"Actors and managers are, at present, actors and managers, and nothing else. In the first place, the actors are controlled by go-

vernment, as was the arrangement in France hundreds of years ago; so that it takes upon itself the regulation of their salaries, and the most popular actor gets twelve pounds a week, and no more. And, indeed, when we consider the generally estimated value of professional effort in every class, we must admit that the very best performer is well paid, at the rate of —including his benefits—one thousand pounds per annum."

"And so," said I, "actors are no longer incensed for spouting school-boys' Greek, or for talking philosophy?"

"No; nor do we any longer publish books to prove their calling superior to all liberal arts, sciences, and professions, taken together. To do them justice, they no longer seem to pine for any such burlesque eulogy of their most sweet voices. Respectable, serious gentlemen they are; respectable by not striving to appear what they are not; serious in the study and practice of their art. They may be fine scholars or not, just as they like; we have nothing to do with the matter; and, indeed, a few are accomplished in that way; though as usual, the majority enjoy but a superficial education, or

no education at all. This however, is got over, by not pretending to any."

"Basta!" said I—"but my teeth chatter at your temerity."

"Why so?—I do not detract from the true claims of an actor, nor remotely injure his professional reputation, or prospects, by refusing to recognize him as an admirable Crichton. I know it was the cant of Kean's age to represent high literary attainments as indispensable to high theatric fame, and mawkish efforts were made to put forward some performers as persons of exceeding accomplishment. But we have arrived at the true notion on this point. Experience itself teaches us that good stage-display, is chiefly derived from a conventional stage tact; inasmuch as many excellent actors, in every age, were uneducated, and a few absolutely illiterate. Barry, in some respects superior to Garrick, was not an educated man, yet Garrick, with all his school-airs, could not extinguish him. John Kemble ought to have been a pleasing scholar, but, the friends, at least, of Kean, never set *him* up in such a light. It is now known that Miss O'Neill—of whom what was applied to a celebrated French ac-

tress* may well be said, and it would, perhaps, contain the essence of our praise—*qu'elle avoit des larmes dans la voix*—it is known that Miss O'Neill—at least while she was Miss O'Neill—had no considerable share of mind. Johnson said of Mrs. Clive, that in private she was a downright vulgar little woman, "and would talk of her *gownd*," while on the stage she enchanted him with her fine lady. Some eminent actors could scarce more than write their names. In fact, education seems to be as superfluous to the best actors, as to the best generals; and we know, that neither the Conqueror of Mexico nor our own Marlborough, were much initiated into the mysteries of the alphabet."

"Can you give me any idea of that stagetact you speak of, Mr. Drudge?"

"None in the world. I no more understand it, than I do the impetus to deliberate murder or *felo de se*; or how a stupid man can make a vendible book in the cloisters of the British Museum; or how "divine Bigottini, or sweet Fanny Bias," or, in our own time, the illiterate Frescati, can sway their limbs or bodies into lines and modes of grace, that Raphael or Sir Joshua

* Duchenois.

might envy; or, in a word, how a mean, mechanical dancing-master can teach a fashionable young nobleman his best of all bows. We cannot possibly suppose, for the dunce, genius to make the book; nor for the figurante that thrilling consciousness and apprehension that enabled Raphael and Reynolds to excel the whole painting world in grace; nor for the hop-merchant, gentlemanly feeling and taste to be polite; nor for the unlettered, or unintellectual actor, such fine appreciation of character and sentiment as inspired the poet with his inventions. All these cases are equally mysterious to my habits of mind; while, at the same time, they would appear to run parallel to each other, though, in course, at relative and respectful distances."

CHAPTER XII.

"——fie upon your law!—
There is no force in the decrees of Venice:
I stand for judgment—answer—shall I have it?"

SHYLOCK.

"Pshaw, madam, don't disturb yourself about that; authors are not worth notice;—I know these sorry gentlemen: they will think themselves happy, provided we deign to act their performances." GIL BLAS, BOOK III. CHAP. XI.

BETTER pleased, on the whole, with the changes on the stage than with those in the poetical world, I continued the subject by inquiring into the state of dramatic authorship, and the degree of fostering patronage afforded by young actors "to the dramatic talent of the age." Mr. Drudge burst out a laughing.

"Come," said he, "I perceive you still recur with singular tenacity to your favourite nineteenth century. But all that has gone by, and, long since, formed a good rallying point for a good laugh. Dramatic authors, curse 'em, are the only among us to whom the revolutions of

taste and time have happened to give any solid advantage. There is Charles Fiveacts, has made more on the stage by his two new tragedies, than I, by my thirteen moral essays. They can keep almost entirely clear of the Lintots, you see. I wish I had stuck to it early."

"But surely you would not give up your literary rank, as a didactic or satirical poet, for the mere pecuniary difference?"

Here Mrs. Drudge gave an audible sigh, and her lord asked—"What do you mean?"

"I mean to contrast the inequality, in popular rank, between the characters of a dramatic writer and"—

"Ah—back you verge again—still measuring as by an exploded standard. When enumerating a while ago, the several classes of poetry, I omitted the drama as a distinct thing—but you do not seem to be aware that a successful tragedy now stands, as it ever should have stood, by the side of King Epic himself? I know that two hundred years since, the matter was otherwise. It seemed then a settled point that all hopes of tragedy should be renounced, and all efforts towards it, flouted. A voice went forth and a clamour arose that mourned the ex-

tinction of dramatic talent, and growled against any attempt to revive it. Why this should have been I scarcely know. Some of the plays of that age have reached us and are valued."

"I believe" said I—"there were many causes. First, the whim of despotic managers and literary, or jealous, or indolent and ill-conducted actors."

"I know; but it is now over. Our managers have nothing to do with the rejection or adoption of a play; and when an actor gets his part he must not throw it up after breakfast, at his pleasure. Take a practical instance. About ten years since we had a very popular actor, who thought proper to dislike what an author had thought proper to write for him; and after vainly hinting at alterations, chose the first night of the new play to mark his displeasure by presuming to slur over his professional duty. The gentleman was arrested in his course, and hooted off the stage; the manager was obliged to withdraw him; and ever since he has been banished, fretting and strutting it "through the provinces." Thus, rather than permit its well-paid servant to interfere with an opportunity for the exercise of its free opinion, the

public promptly resolved upon denying itself even the considerable entertainment a good actor was capable of affording."

"That likes me well," said I; "but to the cause of the former depreciation of new plays. The great passion of the people for sights"—

"Had nothing to do with that cause. So far back as Terence—whom under every circumstance his enlightened countrymen knew how to estimate—we find one of his plays, *the Hyecra*, interrupted by a noise, which the apparent manager attributes, in the prologues, to an expectation of rope-dancing—

'Funambuli eodem accessit expectatio'—

the people were grown so *besottedly* fond of rope-dancing—

'Ita populus studio *stupidus* in funambulo
Animum occuparat'—

"There was a high question, if Kenilworth is authority, between bear-dancing and William Shakspeare, in the days of Elizabeth; and Pope thus bears testimony to the zeal of the multitude of his own time—

'The play stands still—damn action and discourse,
Back fly the scenes and enter foot and horse—

With laughter sure Democritus had died,
Had he beheld an audience gape so wide;
Ah! luckless poet! stretch thy lungs, and roar,
That bear or elephant shall heed thee more.
While all its throat the gallery extends,
And all the thunder of the pit ascends—
Loud as the wolves on Orcas' stormy steep,
Howl to the roarings of the northern deep!'

IMITATIONS OF HORACE, EP. 1.

"From all which it is evident, that, at all times, the mass of the people liked Harlequin and the horses, while observation also shews that, except at the unfortunate period we discuss, there were an attendant taste and patronage of new plays among the learned and accomplished."

"I don't know what to make of it," said I.

"Nor I, well, to say the truth," said Mrs. Drudge.

"Yet," quoth her partner—"let us first recollect that the law of the land then afforded no protection to the property of authors in plays: that it allowed dramatic writers to be deprived of the fair pecuniary reward of their labour, by a dozen, twenty, or fifty people, who had no claim in justice or in equity."

"I do not quite understand you," said I.

"Then hear the case. By the general law of copyright, an author in any other branch of literature had insured to him, for a specified number of years, the entire profits of his successful book. Did we here discuss this very law, it might with much justice be asked, how could the lapse of any number of years take away the author's right in his own property? How could time change into no title, a title once admitted and protected? Time has not such an effect in any other case of property. It has the contrary effect. It is the great cement that in every other case of property or title, binds and confirms right and possession. If a man realizes a fortune by trade, by agriculture, or how he can, it continues his own, and his heirs for ever; he is not limited, in enjoyment of it, to a few years, after which, another man, or twenty men, shall share between them the continuous proceeds of an estate, he alone has toiled to form. Yet to intitle himself to an equal participation of the same law, an author exactly does what any other person, in any of these instances, is supposed as doing. By writing a successful book he *creates* a property, which, so long as that book is read and

sold, ought to be exclusively held by him or his representatives. And on what principle of reason or equity shall one, or a hundred, who have never assisted in making the property, dispossess him, or his representatives, of its eventual produce?

"Say, that, after a certain time, it is necessary, for the general diffusion of knowledge or amusement through every class, the book should be republished at a moderate price, and the author deprived of some of the arbitrary profits he has chosen to draw from it. Even this might admit of rational debate; yet, as it is a bye question, I grant it at once; content with observing that such an arrangement by no means makes either imperative or natural, the taking out of the author's own hands the republication of his book, at any price; oblige him if you will, to exact a half, or third of his original receipts; oblige him to reprint at the lowest terms, still let *him* be the proprietor. Sometimes, it may be wise or expedient to sacrifice an individual to the good of many; that is, when the many cannot be served without such a sacrifice; but here is no case in point; here is no necessity for inflicting the individual hardship. The

good to be done is the diffusion of the book at a reduced price; and this the author can singly effect.

"We pass the question, however, in our way to another of still greater injustice. Imperfect as was the protection afforded by the law of copyright to authors in general, dramatic authors were left without sheltering law of any kind. In their case we must irresistibly regard the stage as the publisher; and now observe.

"The theatre which first produced a new play came to an understanding with the author as to his pecuniary remuneration. The theatre which next played it, gave him nothing; nor the next; nor the next. But when a new piece was successful in London, it immediately became an object to every provincial stage through the United Kingdom, was got up in each as soon as possible, and brought money more or less, into the treasury of each. Yet of that money the author never got a moiety; so that in a few days after the first appearance of his play, twenty or thirty managers, scattered through England, Ireland, and Scotland, were absolutely putting into their pockets the natural proceeds of his personal property.

"While, even under the crude law of copyright, an author in any other walk could select a publisher, and limit to one press the publication of his work, and for years enjoy its full profits, a stage-author was caught up and republished by every manager in the country; and upon the instant too; without the power, though certainly with all the right, to claim any portion of their pirated advantage.

"See the sterling injury to the author. On the boards of the most liberal of the two great London houses, a full piece could not, with entire success, come in for more than four hundred pounds; (one of the two had the folly to exhibit a card of terms by which it was impossible to get farther than two hundred;) and there all chance of stage profit to the author ceased; though night after night, through the provincial theatres, his play was earning ten times, twenty times that sum; while, supposing him entitled to only a tithe of the clear profits of each night's performance, in each theatre—an arrangement by no means unreasonable between the real proprietor and the man who had no claim at all—a good, successful piece, would eventually have netted, for its

author; three thousand pounds, instead of four hundred; and thus he lost, in the absence of a just law, two thousand pounds at least, to which he was fairly entitled, as ever was a landlord to the annual rent of his acres; and, certainly, as ever was the writer of a novel, or a tale in verse, to the exclusive profits, for a number of years, of his successful book.

"At that time there were, at least, thirty theatres through Great Britain and Ireland, in all of which an attractive new play came out. It ran, from night to night, say, during two years, only seven nights in each; thus it would be enacted two hundred and forty nights, during two years, in different parts of the kingdom. Say again, that an author only deserved to share, of the full profits of his own play, with each manager, ten pounds each night—(and keep in mind that *actors* got twenty, thirty, forty pounds a night, in the age we criticise)—this, within two years, and independently of the remuneration of the metropolitan house that first produced it, would be two thousand four hundred pounds; and thus, by the multiplication-table itself, I more than demonstrate my case.

"In a world where, at all times and under all circumstances, a man and his work are, to a certain degree, weighed against the sum both can produce, this well-known incapacity of the stage-writer to make money for himself—(whatever he might do for others)—must have generated an humble notion of himself and his play; particularly in the minds of those very persons whom the absence of law permitted to monopolize the very advantage he should have possessed. In fact, managers and actors could not well help thinking that the play-wright was born for them, rather than for himself, or,—if he happened to have any—for his family; that he was, to all intents and purposes, a kind of rare tool, invented and sharpened by Providence for their especial comfort: and the public seemed of the same opinion."

"It is changed now?" I asked.

"It is," replied Mr. Drudge; "yet, after all, you recognize it only as an adoption of the equitable French law of more than four hundred years standing.

"Perhaps, growing out of this (I may call it) legal depreciation of plays, there may be a good deal in what you said about managing

actors, and literary actors. Garrick, with his airs and vanity, began that, when he sent poor Hume to cry, and scribble lamentations over Will's monument in the 'Corner;' and tempted and puffed up by an example so dazzling, succeeding actors, as vain at least as the Bonapartian Roscius, tried to ape his legislation also. Where the manager was an actor of popular rank, the author could thus be summarily disposed of; where he was only a manager, or else an actor of inferior note, he was ruled by the greatest stage hero in his company; and thus, again, the play-wright only changed masters, or got—to use a pretty saw—out of the frying-pan into the fire. From the arbitrary, and often vulgar decisions of petty whim or vanity, or idleness, or worse, in either instance, the author had no appeal. The public never troubled themselves to know or care about the matter; though at proper intervals they very consistently asked—why have we not new plays? and what are authors doing? and why do they not attend to our national honor and glory?"

"I think I recollect," said I, "a case in which the gracious public not only recognized the despotic dynasty of managers and actors, but were

most anxiously foremost to confirm that unnatural legislation. It was upon the re-opening of one of the great theatres, in 1822, when, in a prologue, that first forestalled all criticism on the improvements the architect had recently made in the house, 'our living dramatists' were thus glanced at by the proxy for the manager:

'As for our living dramatists, if now
The genuine bays disdain to deck their brow,
Still they can please!'

"The stuffed and gaping house liberally assented to this suggestion, and with deafening applause committed the poor devils of stage-writers to the care and criticism of the green-room."

"While taste is unformed it is sensual, and therefore more apt to be pleased through the eye or ear, than through the delicate conduits that lead to the soul and the intellects," said Mr. Drudge; "and hence, in that age, actors who could be seen and heard, and who every night carried on a kind of personal intimacy with the public, were, first, more fascinating people than authors, and then more admired, and then more thought of, and at last more considerable in

public estimation; and they received every proof of this child-spoiling good-will. Some of them were allowed a salary beyond that of a judge of the land, and of the first personages in other countries; beyond that of the president of the United States, for example. Five successful stage-authors, successful to the utmost stretch allowed by the existing arrangements, could not, in the year, get as much money as one popular actor. Then the scenic favourite might play what pranks he pleased. As an epicure will excuse an occasional bad dinner, resulting from the occasional freaks of a savoury cook; as a fashionable lady will overlook the obstinacy or pertness of an accomplished waiting-woman; so did the public of 1823—4 good-naturedly tolerate any little aberrations or assumption in their play-house pets. And from this state of taste came more of the indifference to authors, of the public; as the epicure before alluded to will, after dinner, smack his lips and praise his cook, but never say grace; and, again, from it came the puny despotism of managers—if they were good actors—over authors; or else, the still more puny swagger of favourite actors over authors and managers together.

"The only sure way in which, under such an order of things, a stage-writer could get on, was by meanly cultivating the condescension of popular performers; and some lived, sufficiently fond of mammon, to fall quietly into harness. They made personal intrigue the stepping-stone to public notice; the question was, to get out a play, at all; and for this, when known, the ever consistent public repaid them with personal disrespect, extending, afterwards, and perhaps naturally, though most unjustly, the same feeling to their works. After hurling down an author —or worse—after having invited a less privileged hand to do it, they then kicked him for falling. Other writers, who contemned and resisted the discipline of the green-room, were shoved aside at the very threshold of their struggle to the public eye; and of these nothing was known. In fact, it was only known that dramatic authorship was almost a paltry contest between whim, arrogance, vulgarity, and petty interests, in which success was scarce more honourable than failure; and poets of established fame in other walks of poetry, despised, or affected to despise—their booksellers enabled them to do either—all participation in it; vent-

ing their study of Shakspeare and Fletcher, Ford and Massinger, Æschylus and Goethe, in everlasting romances, and mysteries, and other poems in blank verse."

"Unless," said Mrs. Drudge, "they occasionally flung down a two-act 'Sketch,' with a threatening notice to managers, which, for every reason, might as well have been omitted."

"Elliston boasted that he wrote to the baronet, petitioning for a play, and leaving a blank to be filled up at the poet's pleasure," said Mr. D.; "and that he was laughed at."

"I doubt," continued the lady, pursuing her last sentence, "but it might have been as well, and as dignified, if, instead of abandoning the stage, those gentlemen had, with 'all appliances' of their weight and characters, endeavoured to reform it."

"Yes," said Mr. Drudge, "and not at last incapacitate themselves for the honorable task by allowing their talking habits to run riot in fireside chat, and long-winded soliloquies,"

CHAPTER XIII.

"Paulum severæ musa tragœdiæ
Desit theatris."

ODES OF HORACE.

"WE have, I think," continued Mr. Drudge, "glanced at some of the causes of the odium, almost, brought on the stage-drama of that day, but perhaps other things accelerated its downfall.

"I perceive by historical anecdotes of the gregarious periodicalism then extant, that every dramatic critic, of, from a five shilling down to a twopenny ephemeral, dreamt himself into a very Dennis and Daniel, together, in his vocation.—There arose, upon the appearance of a new tragedy, a prodigious sigh about the defunct spirit of Fletcher, a prodigious affectation of acquaintance with that poet; and then, by contrast, a superb contempt for the unhappy new-born. I believe, in my conscience, the majority of these

gentlemen knew as much about Fletcher as they did about Confucius. But no matter—such was the cant; and it was repeated and repeated, and read and read, until, in due time, it became deposited in the cavities of the public cranium; and thus again the stage-poet was visited with more indifference than even the agency of players and managers could industriously earn for him. So that after having first found, along with Pope, that 'Actors know as much about what is *right*, as tailors do about what is *graceful*,' the ill-starred poet had further to learn, from Horace and Pope together, that

'There still remain'd, to mortify a wit,
The many-headed monster of the pit,
a crowd,
Who, to disturb their betters mighty proud,
Clattering their sticks before ten lines are spoke,
Call for the farce, the bear, or the black joke!'"

"How do you explain," said Mrs. Drudge, turning to me, "this simultaneous hark-in of all the possible critics on all the possible play-doers?"

"Very badly," quoth I—"for I can't explain it at all."

"Then shall I try?" asked Mr. D.; and so went on.

"We have lately discovered, in the old archives of Drury and Covent-Garden, a number of small clasped books, with parchment covers, in which the managers kept lists of the names of every author, who, from time to time, presented a play; and, after each name, followed that of the author's piece; and, after that again, certain words that registered the rejection or reception, or, as it might have been, the regular damnation of the said piece. By these books we have ascertained, that from 1813 to 1823, not less than twenty thousand plays had been kicked out, or damned, at the rate of one thousand per year, at each house. I need not remark, that each lady and gentleman who sent in a play, thought it the best in the world, and, when it was rejected, or when it failed, and when another was occasionally successful, imbibed a natural, though deadly hatred for that other.—Thus, every year, a new successful play was sure to have two thousand common enemies; in ten years, twenty thousand—and, mark you, of disappointed authors alone. But supposing

only ten friends to each disappointed author, who felt, with him, the peerless pre-eminence of his ill-fated play, and entered into all his after-feelings of chagrin about it, the cohort would thus, in ten years, amount to two hundred thousand. Let us, however, abide solely by the authors, and so proceed. In the year 1823, there flourished in England, through the counties and in London, and independently of some that cannot properly come into calculation, exactly twenty thousand periodicals: to these, season after season, were attached, as theatrical critics, twenty thousand rejected and mortified play-wrights—"

"I beg your pardon," said I, "but surely you need not go on;—Oh lord!—if you had uttered this two hundred years ago!—"

"Still it would have been the blessed truth, sir," said Mr. Drudge.

"But do you not rather think," I continued, "that the mistakes made by the public between regular procurers of pieces for the theatre, and those who studied the legitimate drama, might have caused some of the undue disrespect with which the latter were treated? We know that melo-drama doers and translators of French

pathos sometimes permitted themselves to be exhibited in a very facetious light to the public. I think I can give you an instance out of my scrap-book:—

"In a case of contested copyright before the Lord Chancellor, in 1822, an affidavit was put in from manager E., in which that gentleman stated that he was in possession of the copyright of the above book since 1817, and that the copy published by the plaintiff was pirated from his work. Mr. E. admitted that the work was written by Mr. M., but written while in his, Mr. E.'s *employment*, and for *his use*; Mr. E. further stated, that Mr. M. was *employed* by him to supply *pieces*, and to do *various other things, at his, Mr. E.'s pleasure*, for which he paid him divers sums of money; and whilst in his employ, &c.—"

"This, I can assure you," I resumed, "is a literal copy from a newspaper report of the day."

"Such cases of mixed servility and nonsense might, indeed, have produced the mistakes, and afterwards the bad consequences you imagine," said Mr. Drudge; "and under the theatrical arrangements of 1823, when classic tragedies and brute performances were suffered on

the same boards, I see no great probabilities against you."

"And have you changed the economy now?" I asked.

"Yes: we boast, at last, a national theatre, for the regular support of which the national taste is become sufficient."

"And the melo-dramas, and French pieces, are they quite exploded?"

"Far from it: they have their own theatres, to which they are confined. And still, as regularly as our consul or ambassador attends the French court, plenipotentiaries from the minor theatres attend the French stage, whose business it is to pounce on every dramatic wonder, born unto mankind of Gallic sentiment and morality, and having clothed the babe in English swaddling-clothes, to forward it by the Calais packet and Dover coach, to the Cat-and-Fiddle, in Piccadilly.

"The rival endeavours, in this view of the different theatres, are very spirited; for the question is, who shall get a French piece soonest. As all the agents on the spot are equally clever and rapid in their closet evolutions; and as all can make up their packets within the same

hour, and deposit them in the Paris parcel, or post-office, it is evident that the various managements here would thus get their copies on the same night: so ingenuity and ardour are at work to contrive new and outwitting modes of despatch.

"One house has thought of a kind of telegraph, to run through the interior to the coast of France, which shall communicate the melo-drama, or whatever it may be, in a trebly-condensed short-hand—a most ingenious blendure of algebra and stenography—I believe, invented by a committee of scientific people of the first class. The only difficulty is the Straits of Dover: what is to be done when the telegraph reaches the coast, still remaining doubtful; but a quorum of the committee seem to think that a glass of sufficient power to read across the Straits, is practicable enough.

"Another manager has applied to a descendant of captain Manby, inventor of the gun-harpoon, hoping to receive his assurance of the feasibleness of securing an MS. in a shell, or cylinder, and having it discharged from Calais to Dover, out of a bomb, of caliber equal to the distance. The classic precedent of the pigeon's

wing is not forgotten; and two houses are, at this moment, training whole dovecotes—the one on Hampstead, and the other on Hounslow Heath—with the notion of starting them early next winter."

CHAPTER XIV.

" —— in the dust the wreck of genius lies;
He whose aspiring hand sublimely wrought
Each bold conception in the sphere of thought."

ROGERS.

IT was with much pleasure, before I took my leave of Mr. Drudge on this evening, that I heard him propose to introduce me the next day to a celebrated connoisseur, in order that we might go together to the fine arts exhibitions, then open.

Though no connoisseur myself, I have a melancholy pleasure in looking at pictures.

One of my earliest and dearest friends was an artist. Poor Charles Varley! He passed away with the frail though beautiful season he admired so much; he died with the dying verdure of trees, with fading flowers and the songs of birds: his blighted body fell to earth amid the foliage whose broken tints he loved, and it

came fluttering around him and upon him, as if in sympathy.

Often had he said to me, "Let my hour steal on in an elegant study, surrounded by the Graces, the Venuses, the Apollos, and the busts of great men; and let my parting look at life be through an open window into a rich country, over vistas of trees and mountains, and dreams of gliding rivers, while the sun hastens to set like my mortal life, or vaults up into a clear, pure morning, like my immortal spirit! Or bear me out into the pleasant places I love, just when their greenness has begun to be tinged with gold and purple, and with autumn's dark deep red; and there, on a couch of heather, or of moss, or on the flat of a rock, among the showering leaves, the dying fragrance, the retiring sighs, and the melancholy music of autumn; there let me yield my last breath to nature, and to the God of nature!"

He had his wish! This was only a boy's tender enthusiasm, but he had his wish. Consumption stole into his fine frame in the beginning of the spring, and, ere the close of September, it had done its work upon him. He knew he was dying, and yet he thought he

should live. It was a strange contest between two instincts. He was resigned to all; he spoke of his probable fate without cowardice or ostentation; and yet moments would come when a false consciousness stirred within him; when a turbulent hope would flood his soul, and overflow in his eye; and then poor Varley used to put his hand on mine, and desiring me to observe its freshness and clearness, and the blue veins that coldly crept through it, he would ask with a smile that to me was agony, did I think it like the hand of a dying man?

He was sent by his physicians into the bosom of a delicious country, that had been the school of his early ideas as a landscape painter. I was his only companion. I tended him as a brother would tend a brother; for he was a brother to me; the sharer of my heart, and the keeper of its entire confidence. Familiar and favourite scenery produced a glow through his mind, and he thought the body must have sympathized, and that he should get better. I scarcely presumed to disturb that innocent and holy delusion; a delusion, I dared to think, sent by God, in pity to the sufferings his wisdom had imposed.

We walked out together into his favourite haunts, and I bore his sketch-book, and his sketching chair; for still he would sketch. I supported his feeble feet on the rough path way, or on the declivity, and often made him sit down when he was unwilling to do so, but when his shivering frame and quick breathing but too truly warned me of a necessity for friendly compulsion. Then he would speak; giving out his vivid impressions of every thing around him, with a force and flow of language, that first astonished, but soon affected me at the heart's core. "Oh! none but those who have watched the steps of a dying, decaying friend, can imagine the bitter sorrow of my soul, when, after a burst of eloquence that caused me to forget my fixed conviction of his fate, I turned, and saw the skeleton body, the panting breast, the pale, damp forehead, where death had already written sentence, and the burning cheek where disease, not health, had hung out, as it were, a red banner of victory.

We sat in a romantic dell, so silent and breathless, that it might have been called the dwelling of solitude. We were shut up from every thing but the Rysdal close-scene, and a

partial glimpse of the heavens. It was evening, and we watched the gradations of light and shade on the rocks, the banks, the water, and the cowering trees. The clouds broke in mellow light into the little valley; and at last, one bold sun-gleam, darting over the edges of the rocks, struck upon the very middle of the picture. Poor Charles looked at this sudden effect, first, with a steady, and then with a sparkling eye, and eagerly motioned to me for his drawing board and tinting materials. I gave them, in silence; neither of us spoke; as if we had thought that a word, a whisper, were enough to scare away the fairy splendour. He rapidly proceeded in his imitative work, and I leaned over him as he washed it in; when, about the middle of the process, the sun-burst began to weaken. I said something expressive of my regret at so capricious a transition, and was, for a moment, only surprised that he did not answer me. Then I looked down upon him. His hand, still holding the pencil, rested on the drawing-board; his head drooped on his breast; his back leaned against the rock, and his knees were slightly raised and crippled. I knelt, and found myself alone with the corse of

my friend! I have preserved his unfinished sketch; it is so like him, and so like his death; a broken light—an imperfect existence—an interrupted thought.

My frequent conversations with Varley made me a theoretic painter, and we often invented pictures together. In moments of deep excitement, some of his conceptions, imparted to me, were, I thought, true and effective; and I fondly hoped, that when years should have added readiness and vigour to his hand, he could not fail of success in the highest walk of his art. Alas! he has passed away as if he had never been, and men are now eminent who were then children, or infants at their mothers' breasts, and they possess the fame for which he panted, and was doomed never to achieve. This is an awful and mysterious thought for me, and often induces a sickening association of reveries.

I shall speak of one of poor Varley's subjects for his intended pictures. I do not know how it is, but I feel a kind of sense of duty in doing this, as if I owed it to his memory to rescue from entire oblivion, one dream, at least, of his extinguished genius.

We used to sit out together a long winter's

evening from dinner-time to midnight, and when the necessary portion of wine had roused him into a good fit of egotism, then, with glowing eyes, and animated visage, and a grace and energy of utterance I have seldom seen equalled, he would tell me of all he intended to do, and ask my opinion, and sue for my criticism, and play off other little innocent affectations, that though I never pretended to notice them, I could see were chiefly assumed for the purpose of affording himself a plausible scope for talking.

On one of these occasions—"I will shew," he said, "the interior of a neat, though somewhat homely apartment. There shall be a small bed—empty—and draped with the white drapery that surrounds the youthful dead. Over it and beside it shall hang an undress cap, and a light jacket, which I shall characterize as parts of the costume of youth. In the corners shall be suspended, a fishing-rod and basket, a fowling-piece and pouches, and other implements of youthful sport; opposite them there shall be a flageolet, and some unfinished landscapes; and, a book-shelf, a table, a desk, a chair out of place, a book turned down, and scraps of ma-

nuscript strewed on the desk, the table, and floor."

Here he paused and looked earnestly and proudly at me for my wonted observation.

"I understand you perfectly," said I; "but you propose to go on. To a very contemplative and susceptive mind, even this would be an eloquent story; but it requires human action to address it to human sympathy, in general."

Still with his eyes fixed on me, he nodded, and went on.

"Near the bed there shall be a window—open—through which you shall get a view of a hilly country, with the spire of a village church in the remote distance. Your eye shall travel a road, winding over little inequalities; and all along this way you shall discover a crowd of people, young and old, rich and poor, on horseback and on foot, moving slowly and mournfully, before and behind a hearse with white plumes."

He uttered these words almost in a whisper, his lip suddenly quivering, and the water standing in his eyes, as his own conceptions became palpable before him. I only nodded, in my turn, twice or thrice, emphatically, as with bent

body, and his looks still rivetted on my face, Charles continued.

"There *was* a dog,"—forgetting his former mode of declaring an event that was to happen, and now unconsciously speaking of it, as of a scene he had really witnessed—"at the foot of the bed, in that desolate chamber, was a pointer dog, couching himself, quietly, but not in sleep. An old and reverend gentleman entered, and stood in great simplicity of attitude looking down upon the empty bed. *He* did not weep; but behind him, almost in the door-way, appeared an aged serving-man, whose eyes were red with tears, whose hands were uplifted and clasped in agony, and yet who seemed to smother his own grief, in awe and pity for his childless master—this shall be my picture."

"If you paint it well," said I, "it will be an affecting one."

CHAPTER XV.

"What mighty difference can there be
'Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee?"

SWIFT.

"I saw the iron enter his soul."

STERNE.

But although the preceding chapter has been written expressly to assert my theoretic feeling for pictures, I honestly aver profound ignorance of their practical merits. Indeed I cannot understand where the thing lies. I was shocked with myself the first day I accompanied to the exhibition-room the connoisseur I have already spoken of. "There," said he, "pausing before a fresh, natural looking portrait,—"there is a fine surface for you."

Now, "a fine surface" was an expression I thought I could comprehend by parity: I recollected the fine surfaces of silk, satin, velvet, and—blamelessly be it spoken—ladies' lips, and

I walked up to the picture, determined to acquire one idea, at least, on a new subject. But lo! the paint was laid on the canvas in lumps and patches, like mortar on a dashed wall, or as if the artist had wrought with his head alone.

"And call ye this a fine surface?" quoth I.

"Why," rejoined my companion, "don't you see you could *stick a pin in it?*"

"Stick a pin in it!—what do you mean by that?" I asked.

"Pugh—come away," answered the connoisseur.

I next found myself spell-bound before a group of classic figures that seemed to me as fine and *glowing*—there's one word of criticism at least—as colours could make them.

"What an exquisite tone of flesh!" observed my friend, as I looked.

"Divine!" said I, without taking my eyes away.

"How pearly that half-tint, and what sweet scumbling under the spectacles!"

"The what?" I asked, quickly turning to him.

"Why, what are you admiring?" said he—"isn't it the portrait of the old gentleman yonder?"

"No," said I, rather crest-fallen,—"I thought you spoke of this bright and beautiful——"

"This!—stuff!"—exclaimed my ciceroni, and adding a sneer and shrug as he turned on his heel to another corner of the room.

"Marry come up and amen!" said I, between my teeth; "the connoisseur waxeth indignant at my stupidity. But, after all, isn't it too bad that I should not be permitted to admire what I like in an exhibition-room?—Suppose I resolve to leave the pictures to those that understand them, and improve my taste on subjects that every son of Adam is allowed to criticise?"—So I determined to study real men and women, and forget the shadowy imitations altogether.

It was the first day of the exhibition, and the connoisseur and I had been early in the field. I now stood in a rather small ante-room, exclusively dedicated to portraits, and distinct from the very superb apartment in which works of the higher class were placed; of which more anon. I was near the entrance-door, when I heard a prodigious rush of persons up stairs, and a confused gabble of shrill voices. Presently, in bounded six little misses and four

little masters; after them, a dozen grown ladies; then three couple of elderly people; and last of all, a round, stumpy, red-nosed little old man. By their talking at each other, I learned that all made one party.

"Where is it—where is it—where is it?"—exclaimed the misses and masters, in a breath.

"Now, I find it, for a wager," said three or four of the grown quality.

"And dear Fanny! where is she?" asked another.

"And aunt Betsy?" cried a seventh.

"Oh, here is pa, I am sure," continued an eighth.

"No, indeed, now, that's not uncle," said a ninth and tenth.

"It must be either of those," observed a grave young gentleman. All the elderly folk agreed with the last speaker; and pa, or uncle, as you will, but, palpably, the fat little man was alternately compared with the two portraits. He was found to answer both, though in different ways, very closely. His eyes were like one, his cheek-bones like another. His neck-cloth was most convincing in the first, and his mouth and chin, and the cut of his cloak, were

the images of these parts in the second, especially, when he dressed after 'change for an evening party. He would give no opinion himself, but I saw him smile as the city connoisseurs disputed his likeness in the separate pictures. At last it was agreed to refer to the catalogue; when, behold!—203, Portrait of a literary gentleman!—"Never mind," said he, "look there!"—he pointed almost to the zenith: my eyes followed his and theirs; and now indeed I saw a bronze-like caricature of his hard face, hung up in the fourth row of portraits, with an expression of feature, as if it would say, "In the name of good sense what do I here, and change hour coming on?—"

The party again paused before a lady's portrait, that one and all agreed could be no other than cousin, or sister, or daughter Fanny. Fanny was not in the room, but her mama was positive;—the very way she wore her raven hair; the very poetical way; the very sparkle of her deep blue eye, and the very fresh pout of her lip, when she did not well know whether to smile or be severe.

"Oh,—yes,"—drawled a male dandy cousin, "and just as she sits and leans forward to speak

to you, her soul beaming through her eyes, and herself bouncing through her boddice.—Look out for 162, Bell."

"No. 162, The Princess Mary Augusta!" screamed Bell.

"Now I see Fan, yonder, near myself," said the little man: the catalogue vouched the fact; and there the lady dangled, in her raven hair, and her poetical way, looking as brown, and as green, and as chalky, as a copper-kettle crusted with verdigris and half scoured with whiting.

"Put *that* down infamous," said a coarse voice at my back. I turned and beheld a nasty little person, and a slim, well dressed young man; the former eyeing a good portrait with the expression of a mastiff who is hungry and within sight of good things, yet not daring to eat: the latter rapidly taking notes with a pencil in a morocco-covered book. One I soon discovered to be of that class of artists who are annually refused places for their pictures; his after remarks confirmed me, but his very clothes, spotted with tints, gave the first intimation of his character; and indeed I smelt him by the atmosphere of oil and turpentine that accom-

panied him in his round. The other was his literary friend, a caterer for some public print. And what shall I say of 135?"

"You remember," replied the painter, rather indirectly answering—"this is one of the gentlemen that assisted in turning out my historical picture."

"I do," replied the note-taker, "and he shall be sorry for it by nine o'clock to-morrow morning,"—and so saying the young gentleman wrote down a line or two with vehemence and despatch, and then followed the shabby, rejected artist, in his tour of criticism.

The rooms began to be crowded to suffocation; and as I am stout, and was then a little gouty in the great toe of the left foot, I retreated into the centre of the room, where some forms, placed at right angles, stemmed the mighty torrent of people that kept pouring and eddying by the walls. And here, after laying my hat by my side, depositing my gloves and handkerchief in it, and resting my hands on my cane, I set myself to discuss the probable characters of my neighbours.

Two ugly, vulgar women, at my side, at-

tracted me: and I wondered what on earth could have indirectly served to drift them into the current of an exhibition-room of art.

Fortunately for me their tongues were not much inclined to repose, nor their conversation pitched in a low key. They had an attic lodger, who was an artist, "the quietest young man that ever lived in a house." Some works of his were among the present display, and his landladies felt sufficiently connected with their probable success to follow them with admiring and longing eyes into the grand exhibition. In fact, they were to be sold immediately, and the last year's rent to be at the same time liquidated. It was not the least amusing part of a system of self-delusion, to hear the old ladies declare the acknowledged merit of the pictures, and the sum they were to net, by their present altitude on the walls.

At first I felt entertained by these discoveries; but in a moment after, owned more than the interest that tempts us to sport with the mishaps of our fellow-creatures; and at last, I detected myself in a sigh, and in a grave, and, if you will, sentimental train of reverie.

I got the author of the pictures before me;

a young, slight-built, pale enthusiast, with some lines of thought and care antedated on his brow. I fancied him in his painting-room, for the last year, hampered with slender means; occasionally, perhaps, disencumbered of means of any kind; and then, he was a stranger among strangers, without friend, patron, or confidant, forcing his fine mind into the vigour and elasticity that was to produce some work of promise. Day after day I saw him toil at these very pictures, sometimes delighted at his own success, sometimes sick at heart from a changed view of his progress.

During all this time his voice was not heard in the house: his step scarcely; I recollected the description just supplied by his landladies. He came modestly down three flights of stairs to take his morning and evening walk; shut the hall-door softly after him; returning back, the very children knew his timid, irresolute knock; as they met or crossed him in the hall, or on the various landing-places, he ventured to pat their heads, call them pretty names, and praise them to their faces, half hoping that the old ladies, their aunts, might overhear his flattery, and be content with an apology the next rent day.

At length his works were done, and with many hopes and some misgivings, sent in to the porter, at the Royal Academy. The opening day came, and he ascended the great staircase with a beating and failing heart; he advanced and looked rapidly around the crowded and glowing walls: the pictures did not appear, and he believed they had been rejected. Faint and overpowered, he sat down on a form, and looked again; and now at last beheld the result of his year of labour and enthusiasm, hung up, as if out of the way; and, even to his own present thought, shamed out of all pretension; colour, force, character, interest, every thing gone—every thing eclipsed in the steady blaze of matured excellence around them.

I perceived he felt the most cutting disappointment—that which comes from a conviction of having deserved it. He had been deceiving himself; he knew nothing of his art; he possessed no power for the attainment of his object—he could never be a painter!—I saw him grow pale; tears flowed down his cheeks, and he rushed out of the gay and happy room, to seek his own solitary attic, and there freely vent the bitterness of his sorrow and mortification.

Alas! perhaps other and still keener thoughts increased his agony: perhaps some anxious father, or some good and gentle mother, who still tranquilly struggled on in the humble and distant home of his childhood, had long awaited this baffling day, and with it; the joyful letter that was to announce the success of an only and beloved son!

And this, Genius, thought I, is the noviciate of thy votaries; and thus, Enthusiasm, art thou taught the crabbed lesson that paralyses hope and energy, unnerves and disjoints many a delicate mind, or at best, but substitutes, for the first sinewy effort of enterprise, a mechanical and callous perseverance! Poor Dick Tinto and his last issuing from his garret in old Swallow Street now came to my mind, and from my heart I agreed with the immortal author of Tales of my Landlord, that he who cannot, with every appliance, mount to the top of the ladder, in the Fine Arts, had best never set his foot on the step.

CHAPTER XVI.

"To come to the point (most mighty Lucifer) we are all of us dealers in politics."—QUEVEDO, *Seventh Vision of Hell reformed.*

"'Tis taste, 'tis genius, 'tis the heavenly ray."

MASON'S FRESNOY.

As it seemed that the connoisseur and myself were not likely to get on very well together, Mr. Drudge, after laughing at our little differences, presented me to an eminent artist of his acquaintance, a serious, unaffected gentleman, from whom it was to be hoped, I should receive more edification, or at all events, indulgence; and the day after my first visit with the connoisseur, I accompanied the author and the painter to the Great Room of the Royal Academy.

I should before have expressed my surprise as well as delight, to meet the Royal Academy occupying the whole of a fine and spacious house, in an open square in Prince-street, Primrose-hill, for the embellishment of which, outside and inside, the several branches of the art,

architecture, sculpture, and painting, had combined their highest efforts.

"Yes," said Mr. Easel, "we at last live with a cabinet and parliament not very remarkably ignorant of the arts, and necessarily indifferent to them. Along with the usual profound knowledge in political economy, bullion and currency, malt, hops, and potatoes, and middling French, our statesmen have, for the last fifty years, made some progress in elegant acquirement and sympathies."

"It was a late thought however," said Mr. Drudge, "and the precedent of the enlightened Greeks, who caused instruction in the fine arts to form a part of gentlemanly education, and of Louis XIV. and his courtiers, so far back as 1635, met but a tardy imitation among us in 1976, or thereabouts."

"But where," said I, "did you get the money to build yourselves out from office-clerks and book-keepers, who, at one time, held in common with the Royal Academy, unfurnished and incommodious apartments in the same house?"

"Where could we," said Mr. Easel, "except out of the same purse that had previously refused the living arts a shilling, though good

jobbers could lighten it of multiplied thousands for the Elgin and Phigalian marbles; or for Mr. Angerstein's collection; or for Sir Hans Sloane's curiosities; or for sending impertinent play-things to the Emperor of China, or the Chan of Tartary."

"Surely," I resumed, "the marbles and the collection were purchased for the benefit of living artists."

"I grant it; and more, I acknowledge a benefit conferred, as well as intended, and as an individual artist, am grateful for both. Yet I mean to say, that such peculiar bounty was either ill-directed, in a degree, or altogether improvident; the first, if it meant to cherish living artists by exclusively purchasing the works of dead ones; the second, if it exhausted, in that especial munificence, the whole means, of which part ought to have been reserved for another mode of patronage. In fact I mean that new pictures should have been purchased as well as old pictures; or that so much money ought not to have been lavished upon the one, if there was not more to spare for the other. In the then forward state of British art, with the Antique, and the annual exhibitions of the British

Gallery about it, with the Continent open, and private collections of old masters accessible at home, art would have been more vitally, as well as more cordially served, if only half of the Elgin fragments, and half the Piccadilly lot, had been purchased, and the rest of the money laid out in the formation of a national mart for native painting and sculpture, such as, some years before, a cotemporary* artist of conspicuous and varied talent, had, in a pamphlet that has got into my hands, ably and wisely projected. I argue this, supposing that after the entire purchase of the 'marbles' and 'collections,' a provident government could not afford any further donation."

With these words we entered the great room of the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy. I was at first disappointed to see scarcely more than a third of the number of pictures that at present, in the year 1824, are hung up on the walls of two ill-suited apartments at Somerset-house. But a closer inspection, and some thought, made me retrace my progress to a conclusion so hasty. I observed that quality and not number was the character of the dis-

* Martin Archer Shee, Esq. R. A.

play, and that selection, rather than diversity, had been the object of the hanging committee. No third or fourth tiers of lifeless, livid caricatures of the human countenance, or of dry compilations from copper-plate landscapes, now offended my eye, or provoked my risibility.

The next feature of novelty that struck me was an absence of portraits—I have before said they were confined to an inferior room—and a predominance of such historical pictures as Da Vinci has invented in his "Supper," and Raphael perfected in his mysterious cartoons. But an abundance of masterly continuations of Wilkie did not at first equally please me.

"A change of opinion on John Knox's hard-headed sentence against church-ornament has opened the way for the one kind of historical pictures," said Mr. Easel, in reply to some of my observations, "and matured good sense and good feeling perpetuate among us, what you will permit me to call the other kind."

"Wilkie, a historical painter!" I exclaimed, "an epic hero of painting!"

"I am prepared to allow for your foreign dogma, my good sir," resumed Mr. Easel. "I

know that, for a long time, here, and even yet, I believe, on the Continent, the epic poem and the historical picture, generally so called, have been, and are considered equivalents in poetry and in art. To this I see no objection; a name does not startle me. But first allow me to tell you what we do *not* now call historical pictures. We do not give that name to boar hunts, or classical allegories, or processions, or tournaments: if you look round, you will see few of such pictures."

"I see none of them," said I.

"No, sir; we prefer event and human situation, as our aim is at human sympathy. No matter how perfect in the mechanical learning of art, we will not paint pictures in which mechanism alone shall predominate; to the exclusion of subject, sentiment, imagination, feeling, and passion, the successful embodiment of which we consider excellence."

"Sound, and mere arrangement," said Mr. Drudge, "are, in poetry, what fine colours, and true pyramids, and brilliant bits, and good keeping, are on canvas; and who ever heard of a superior poem which was only harmonious and well planned? Yet what else is a merely well-

drawn, well-coloured, well-toned, well-grouped picture?"

"Nothing else," answered Mr. Easel; "the empty melo-drama of the pencil, that sensually fills the eye, but leaves the heart and soul untouched and uninfluenced.

"Thus, sir," he continued, readdressing himself to me, "we think that the highest effort in painting must be to convey, with truth and force, such passages of human action as sway the feelings; then we go a step further, and admit that this may be done by actors in an humble sphere of life, in humble costume, and in a situation of no celebrity; we do not require them to be dressed in plumes and armour, in brocade or ermine, and to be engaged in something that is to make the earth startle or echo, and the welkin ring."

"But here," said I, "you interfere with your own half-admission of the similarity between the epic in poetry and the historical in painting; inasmuch as no poem can be epic which has not kings and heroes, at least, for its actors, and some tremendous event for its action."

"Supposing me to rank them," resumed the artist, "I rank, without comparing them; and

in truth they are mentioned together only because we want to know what are the two greatest efforts in the two arts. If you wish for something in literature that shall be more like our abstract notion of the highest order of picture, I propose the drama—and the successful and acted drama, most of all. Tell me that the drama is second in importance to the epic, and that I must not therefore class it with the first thing in art, and I answer, I shall compare without classing them; as, before, I named an equivalent in rank, without drawing a parallel. But, however this may be arranged, we are convinced that such scenes of the legitimate drama as are most effective on the stage, are also most proper to be selected by an historical painter, who is, indeed, one, in the true meaning of the word.

"In every view, we think the similitude will hold. As melo-dramas, or mere shows, and mere stage-grouping, form no part of the true drama, neither do their *pendents* in art form any part of true historical pictures; this we have already seen. As human action, or domestic distress, constitutes the interest of the legitimate play, the same thing produces the same result in painting. What makes the play most inte-

resting, must be considered as stamping its character: so, also, of the picture; and hence we are entitled to say, that, in both, stirring situations, and strong and successful appeals to human sympathy, are the distinguishing features of works of the highest class.

"This leads me to the same inference I before approached, in another or more rapid way. A play is successful, and consequently of the first order, independently of the rank of its dramatis personæ: that is, there can be, there are, excellent plays, of which the persons are of humble rank; and others, in which the rank of the persons is no cause of the excellence. Belvidera, Monimia, Desdemona, Mrs. Beverley, Shylock, Reuben Glenroy, afflict, move, or startle us as much, as if they were all queens, princesses, and sultans; and, without any stretching after points, so does George Barnwell; nay, so would all, if all were of his station in society;—or if all, and he among the rest, were of still humbler station. In the second view, we weep tear for tear with Lear, or Lady Randolph, not because one is 'every inch a king,' and the other a daughter of the princely Douglas, but because we commiserate the 'poor, infirm, weak, and despised

old man,' and the unfortunate wife and despairing mother. 'And here let me have the advantage of remarking, that great characters alone, even joined with an action of celebrity, but removed from domestic interest, have never been able to keep up a play; and of the truth of the assertion, Alexander, Cato, and even Julius Cæsar, are witnesses; while it is also worth notice, that the only charm of the last-named tragedy rests on the private friendship, and quarrelling and reconciliation of two Roman citizens, and on the words—'Portia 's dead.'

"Mr. Campbell, in his British Poets, hints, indeed, that Lillo looked too low for his characters; but this was inconsistent with the poet, who, himself, successfully appealed to us in 'Gilderoy,' 'The Irish Harper,' and 'The Exile of Erin;' and who knew that genius cannot be inconvenienced by any adaptation from nature. Lillo was, as a dramatist, what Crabbe is as a poet. His George Barnwell is now left in the hands of second-rate actors, not on account of Mr. Campbell's criticism, but because first-rate actors will not condescend to exhibit as the annual scare-crows of junior partners, counting-house clerks, and gay apprentices; and that

kind of tragedy is said to be exploded because no man of talent, since Lillo's time, has tried to perpetuate it.

"If all I have said be reasonable—and in the name of good sense let us not war on words, or turn to the school for definitions—Wilkie is a painter, not only *of* the highest class, but *in* the highest class. Call his pictures 'historical,' if you will; if not, choose another name: but read it impartially. I said I did not care about names—they cannot alter things.

'The rose,
By any other name, would smell as sweet.'

"Wilkie does all, on canvas, that we consider the power and privilege of the greatest painter: he excites, thrills, astonishes; our feelings are his servants. Witness the man who, in 'Distraining for Rent,' sits tapping the table with one hand—the other, while all is ruin about him, spread convulsively, like an eagle's talon, over his face; or the poor woman, that, in the 'Chelsea Pensioners,' rushes through the crowd to look out for her husband's name in the gazette."

"I well remember that," said Mr. Drudge;

"amid a scene of joy and jubilee, a wretched creature pushes up, and, eagerly stretching forward, looks into the paper. Her child, encircled by her left arm, is crying aloud, but, for the first time, unheard or unheeded. A terrible apprehension and a battling hope have chased the blood from her face and lips. She is desolate! and her husband, the father of her child, her only protector, may have fallen—or he *may* live! Her wild and ghastly eyes, that will not wait for the slow perusal of the old man, fly, with lightning rapidity and unsteadiness, from line to line—her breathing is suspended—her heart at once sickens and throbs—one moment more, and she will be happy or cursed."

"This, sir," resumed Mr. Easel, "is the kind of subject which, expressed as this is, we consider as belonging to the highest class in the art; nor do we criticise, at leisure and in cold blood, a deficiency of fine clothes, which, in the moment of excitement, and at the proper moment, the artist made us forget. And such pictures we hang side by side with Elymas himself. Wilkie would have conceived and painted that picture exactly as Raphael has done; or the author of that ex-

traordinary figure used the same means and resources that Wilkie must have preferred; a sitter from what has been incautiously termed 'vulgar nature,' and the moral character disclosed without apparent effort, or only with the effort of fidelity."

CHAPTER XVII.

'Attend,
Whoe'er thou art, whom these delights can touch—
Whose candid bosom the refining love
Of *nature* warms." AKENSIDE.

"Poor lost Alonzo! Fate's neglected child!"
CAMPBELL.

"AND this is our gallery of native art,"—said Mr. Easel, after having conducted us into another spacious apartment—"open the year round."

"I longed for such a thing in England," said I, "and wondered, before now, that you should have allowed even the Spaniards to anticipate you, who, so long ago as the year 1821, had collected between two and three hundred of their native pictures. Aye," I continued, glancing around, "there is Wilkie, no doubt—but where do you begin?"

"Why, with old Hans; and our only excuse is, that we cannot help it. He is the grappling link between us and art; though, in the first instance, he was not our countryman, and owed us nothing but his sleek fortune; and in the second instance, is not a surpassing honor to any country. Excluded from successful competition at home—for though it was then night to the arts in England, it was broad noon to them on the continent—Holbein came here on something of the same speculation that sends a bad lawyer or doctor from a metropolis to a country town. In a land of the blind, a man with one eye is a superior personage; and in a country ignorant of art, Hans was worshipped. I do not mean to deny him merit. He possesses truth to a proverb; but he also illustrates the proverb that truth is not to be told at all times. He looks hard at every thing, and tells every thing he sees with a crusty and pertinacious honesty. All facts are equal in his estimation: he polishes trifling parts, and hunts detail into meagre lines and forms, till it becomes hampered with itself, is cut off from alliance with the main subject, and ceases to be relatively useful.

"Next comes Vandyke, a splendour, indeed,

surrounding himself with the glow of his master, Rubens, subdued into his own propriety, and accompanied with his own wonderful detail and expression: but still no native splendour for us.

"And next to him we are anxious to put his laborious and deferential pupil, Dobson, our first English painter of any note. Much of the master's feeling, and all of his manner, may be seen in Dobson: squared and measured upon Vandyke, adopting his methods, and, if possible, borrowing his eyes, the respectful student sought to be what his tutor was, not in similar, but in the self-same things. Reynolds has long ago nailed down into a truism, that 'he who follows will ever remain behind;' and the highest praise commanded by our native artist, is, that even a connoisseur may mistake some of his best works for Vandyke's middling ones; or that he was as like his master, as his master was like nature.

"In due chronological series, behold Kneller and Lely, the unfeeling sycophants of a trifling and unfeeling age, and, thank heaven, foreigners again!"

"With all their men, Parises and Agamem-

nons in buckler or buckram, and all their women, Helens or Cressidas, languishing courtezans or frail shepherdesses," said Mr. Drudge,

"Lely eclipsed Vandyke, at the levee," resumed Mr. Easel, "and it is known his great ambition was to effect this. But time, in whose rigid court of equity false claims meet a sure though slow adjustment—the stern lord chancellor whose decree involves not opinion, fashion, nay, law itself—old time has set the matter right at last, and we live to estimate Sir Peter as he merits. He painted conceits or lies."

"How could it happen, that with Vandyke before them, the people of that age allowed the false pretensions of Lely?" I asked.

"Recollect," answered Mr. Easel, "that Vandyke, although he led, had not time to form, the national feeling for true art; that he found and left it, uneducated: therefore, in turn, Lely could lead it too; and with the more fascination, because he flattered its ignorance, feeding it with profuse blandishments instead of frugal truths.

"The next (Jervis, or Jarvis) was promised immortal honor by the greatest poet of the Augustan age:—

'Beauty, frail flower! which every season fears,
Blooms in thy colours for a thousand years!'

"Five hundred years—half the number—have not lapsed since those lines were written, yet Pope has proved a false prophet."

"Aye," said Mr. Drudge, "it was rather an adventurous promise, even in a friend's behalf. We poets may, modestly enough, declare of ourselves—

'—— *nomenque erit indelebile nostrum.*'

"But—'*Si quid habent veri vatum præsagia*'—as regards our own verses, there still is no reason why you should expect us to be right about pictures, concerning which, to say truth, we have generally known very little."

"Are you vindicating your craft, or what?" said Mr. Easel—"but no matter—step we on."

"Then our next step," said I, "is to Reynolds, in course—the great native parent of native art."

"Pardon me," said Mr. Easel, "we properly meet Hogarth first, the predecessor of Reynolds, even in art; and in that kind of art, without a feeling for which, Reynolds could scarce have

been exactly what he was, or the present English school fully enjoy its unquestioned claims to vigorous originality."

"Surely," I remarked, "you speak, in comparison with Reynolds, of a sad caricaturist."

"In comparison I do not speak at all; but still I speak of Hogarth as the inventor, in British art, of a principle, or what shall I call it, that, modified by Reynolds and his followers, and, at last, perfected in our age, has infused into English pictures and statues a novel beauty and interest. Hogarth was the father of the Picturesque."

"The monstrous contrary of classic grace and grandeur," said Mr. Drudge.

"*A* contrary, perhaps," Mr. Easel went on, "but not *the* contrary. Picturesque is a relief, rather than an antagonist, to the rigidly right. It may sometimes winningly trespass on a very scholastic rule, or on one not absolutely indispensable. It may break up heavy importance with lively ease, or replace passive fitness with active interest. It is not grace or grandeur, I allow, nor an essential of either; yet a gratifying mode of both. It is not a rule; yet it wars not with rules, but may be called their ally."

"I argue it not with you," said Mr. Drudge; "but on that you know we differ."

"And still I hold my creed. If Hogarth never lived, we could not now fully possess what I will call the picturesque grace of Reynolds. His study of Hogarth, or acquaintance with him, is visible in his Cupid as a Link-boy; Mercury as a Pick-pocket, The Snake in the Grass, The Infant Academy, The Fortune-teller, and others; while spiritual portions of the same feeling run through all his fine portraits; pervading every means used for effect, whether in action, character, colouring, or light-and-shade, and so swaying, in a degree, the entire impression we receive. It is differently applied, no doubt; but the difference is rather attributable to its passing through different minds, and the necessity for carrying it into a different species of subject."

"Poor Barry!" I exclaimed, as I stood before some of his pictures, which I had formerly seen.

"In every thing, but raw mind and heart, and even in knowledge of his art, poor," said Mr. Easel. "He could not, or would not, brook the laborious acquirement of other men: he would paint *his own mind*—no matter how, he

would paint it. He thought to fill the public eye and taste with ethical and mystical allegories:—he might as well have expected to make an alderman keep the pope's lent.

"At all events, such subjects could never have been popular, and among us they are exploded. An allegory in print is hard enough; on canvas it is never intelligible. The artist himself cannot combine and adapt an allegory without much ingenious effort, and subtle divisions of reasoning; so that to understand his finished work, we ought previously to have followed his preparatory process, or he should be at our elbow to hint us into it, or we should spend time in hitting it off ourselves. This is setting us down to a task instead of an enjoyment; it is making us study for mere pleasure; and this we will not do. And here you again see our objection to the artist who insists on pleasing us without an appeal to our human responses or affections. All the sparkling of imagination, coloured through the cold prism of metaphysics, can never produce such an effect."

"From what you say of Barry's pictures," said I, "and from what I have picked up of his life, the man seems much to resemble the artist."

"Yes," said Mr. Easel, "he was a great painter, and a man—in theory."

"While avowedly studying in Dublin," I resumed, anxious to get in a word; "Barry did not dislike a little 'ranting round in pleasure's ring;' but with the usual remorse that attends the misuse of high powers, he stormed at himself for his occasional lapses; and in this mood, stopping one night to soliloquize on Essex bridge, just after his escape from a convivial party, he flung his purse into the Liffy, ran home from it pennyless, and locked himself up to repent, paint, and (so far as abstinence could go) to do penance for all past transgressions.—This anecdote of his youth (for Barry was then a lad) shews the hasty and rapid mind of the man."

"It does," said Mr. Easel; "and the miscalculations, and, most of all, the disingenuous misinterpretations from others to which that sanguine temperament exposed him, made Barry a misanthrope of a gross and unmanageable vein. I remember an anecdote or two, authenticated by a brother artist, that proves what I say. Some few years before his death, he dined with an old friend, and laid down eighteen pence

for his dinner, and, on recollection, sixpence more for grog. One evening, at Somerset-house, another friend, on coming in, said, 'How do you do, Mr. Barry? *I hope* you *are well.*'—'I don't believe you,' grumbled Barry."

"To such a nature," said Mr. Drudge, "abundant cause had been given, however, for this result of character. He proposed to the Society of *Arts,* of the Adelphi, to decorate their hall *gratis,* and his offer was accepted, they generously agreeing to provide——the materials. The enthusiast, nothing daunted, laboured at this gigantic undertaking in solitude and penury. I scarcely can go on with patience. He could allow himself but fourpence a day for subsistence during this time; and three years he lived on fourpence a day; and even this morsel of bread was earned by nightly labour, independent of his grand daily occupation."

"Yes," resumed Mr. Drudge, "and when the pictures were done, the society accepted them, allowing them to be exhibited, indeed, for a few weeks, for the artist's advantage; from which act of munificence resulted, according to a northern review, five hundred pounds; according

to the printed testimony of a brother artist,* nothing; but my chosen authority adds, that Barry was made an honorary member, and voted *two* hundred pounds, for three years' labour. He died a recluse, a fanatic, and a pauper; supported, during the last years of his life, by the subscriptions of his brethren."

"But he lay in state, in a great hall," said I, "which was covered with his pictures, and royal mourners sat by his bier."

"Fifty pounds a year, during his life, would have been as reasonable a tribute," said Mr. Easel.

"Alas, alas, for those posthumous honors!" exclaimed the poet, "this twining of wreaths over a death's-head—this scribbling an apotheosis on a winding-sheet!"

* Mr. E. Dayes.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

CHAPTER XVIII.

" —— Some there are who indirectly stray
Where purblind *practice* only points the way"—
FRESNOY.

" Have not to do with them—beware of them."
SHAKSPEARE.

"AND West?" said I.

" Behold him," said Mr. Easel; " an indefatigable practitioner, who, with half of Barry's genius, would have left a more even name behind him. Or with West's learning, what a different thing Barry had made of this heavy extravagance, " Death on the Pale Horse." It is unjust, however, to measure West by one of his failures; indeed by a picture, in which, every man, as well as he, must have failed."

" You do not consider it a good subject, then?" I asked.

" On the contrary, I—*we*, I should rather say, consider it as one of a class more com-

pletely out of the reach of painting, than processions and allegories are beneath, or inconsistent with the art."

"There are subjects," said Mr. Drudge, "which even the pen can only dare to hint, and which its delineation would totally destroy. Poetry succeeds in them by not attempting them; by leaving them *undrawn*, in fact; but the sister art must *draw* every idea it tries to convey, and hence it must fail in those subjects.

"The whole beauty and effect of Job's and Ossian's ghosts, arise from the vagueness of their description. Job says his vision was without face or shape—'*yet it stood before him.*' Ossian says—'Dim, and in tears stood the hero—the stars dim twinkled through his form.' How impressive and convincing are both the passages! Yet they are so, because they do not suggest determined ideas of the objects."

"Let an artist venture to compose from these descriptions," resumed Mr. Easel. "Job gives to his vision neither form nor feature. Supposing the artist to omit all likeness to human shape or face, still he should substitute some shape or other. He should put something on the canvas; he should fill up an outline; he

should supply a visible, certain shape, which would be, at once, a departure from his text, and a disagreeable intrusion on our arbitrary interpretation of it.

"Again—how could he embody that rich, mysterious passage—'*dim* and in tears stood the hero?' I am obliged to use language, even in my question, of a self-contradictory kind; I have asked how the painter could 'embody,' that which has no body, and of which the charm and excellence is that it has not. But how could he *draw* the floating idea half aroused by the word—'dim?' To be sure the whole sentence might be painted. A sketchy figure, without strong markings of pencil, or positive light and shade, might be contrasted with a well-defined, well-marked, and highly-lit or deeply-shaded figure; and a hundred stars, looking as if the ghost belonged to all the orders in the world, might be got in, within the outline or boundary of his form. But I fear this is the whole a clever artist could do. I believe his picture could not startle the mind like the text. I believe he could not deceive us into a supposition that those flake-white stars did indeed twinkle through that academic personage."

"Painters have always failed in such subjects," Mr. Drudge resumed.

"The world was never yet frightened, nor awed, nor astonished, with a spirit, or a spiritual being, on canvass. Little boys' heads, with goose-wings for ears, give but a curious idea of angels. The essence of the deity has met a degrading, as well as most abortive delineation, in an old man with a long beard, in an Hebrew word, or in a triangle. 'Let there be light, and there was light'—a picture by one of the greatest artists the world ever saw, is a 'lame and impotent conclusion' on the sublime context. A feeble old man surrounded by black clouds, uses all his strength—and it cannot be much—as with outspread arms he tries to rend those clouds and unprison the light. He makes an exertion—he encounters a difficulty, and is overcoming it. This is a poor human conceit. God used no exertion, for he had no difficulty to overcome. He willed that there should be light, and there was. With Him volition was at once effort and accomplishment."

"Reasoning thus," said Mr. Easel, "we regard 'Death on the Pale Horse,' as a very strange though unavoidable departure from the

sacred text. That text contains the words of a dream. It doubtfully indicates supernatural and unreal action. It glances at the shadow of allegorical beings, but in no one instance does it stop to describe them. 'And I looked, and behold a *pale* horse, and *His* name that sat on him was—Death!'—We are not here told what kind of face the rider had, what passion it expressed; how he was habited; or what was his action. Every thing is left in that general, embryo state, to which fancy alone can, in the depth of her own dream and silence, afford shape, motion, existence. The very word '*pale* horse,' in contradistinction to '*white* horse,' that follows, gives a new and exciting idea, which continues to excite because it cannot be gratified. We ask ourselves what is a '*pale*' horse? we cannot think what colour is meant. A gradation of any colour may be pale, with reference to that colour. There may be pale red, pale brown, pale any thing. But when Mr. West paints a palpably *gray* horse, we do not see the visionary, colourless, beautiful object of the revelations. And when he puts on his back a tall person, covered with an undertaker's cloak, and gnashing his teeth, and rolling his

eyes like a maniac, we perceive nothing of the still, gliding vision of the Evangelist. The whole picture is an earthly scene; men, women, and children, and beasts of the earth. The gratuitous elucidation of the lion-hunt, and the fire-side distress of the dead mother, and her wailing child and husband, pin us to the surface of this real globe. St. John could never have seen, in a visionary world, the every day face of that young man who is about to strike the lion. In a word, they were not mortal creatures he saw; these are mortal creatures, every one of them."

"Am I to understand you," said I, "as placing out of the scope of the art, all supernatural subjects?"

"All such," replied Mr. Easel "as the literary text leaves, like those we have considered, vague and undefined, and of which the excellence is that very omission, or want."

"Yet," I resumed, "I have seen one production of the graphic muse completely successful, in a series of scenes mostly of a supernatural kind; I mean illustrations of Goethe's Faust, by Mr. Retch."

"Recollect, however," said Mr. Easel, "that

the text has none of the character, forbidden, according to our theory, to the artist. It does not resemble the passage from Job, or from Ossian, or from St. John. It is, itself, a finished picture, well-drawn and determined in all the parts."

"Nor are the supernaturals of it," said Mr. Drudge, "beyond the reach of human comprehension. The old nursery tale was popular before Goethe wrote, and, so far as it went, had been invented by that exact kind and degree of familiar superstition that inhabits every heart, and thus gave evidence to the poet of how far *he* might go in company with our responses. It was indeed the 'so far and no farther,' which once known, is half the battle, half the victory to genius. In filling up his canvass, Goethe kept a steady eye on the given outline; added relief and tint, with a regulated hand, or surrounded it with a back ground and atmosphere in tone with what we may again call the *dead-colour* he had received as his scale and standard. Therefore the Faust is a reflection of our common notions of what it ought to be. We have not Satan in panoply complete, a mighty and monotonous kind of personage, as in Milton;

but the domestic devil—the very same devil we have been fancying from our cradles. He comes in the shape of a black-dog, or in his own unique assumption of the human form, malignity and sneer blended in his face, and his person slightly yet brutally deficient. He speaks in the mixed freedom, and jeer, and mystery, which our wayward fancy attributes to him, and which we laugh and shudder at. Faustus sells to him the reversion of his life for the usual remuneration, and then is made to do things that conveniently hasten the foreclosing of the mortgage on his soul. All this we feel to be proper and effective, because it is our own; we assent, because we have assented to it."

"And even when the poet introduces *his* accompaniments," rejoined Mr. Easel, "we see things and shapes in keeping with the heterogeneous compound of the reigning devil himself, and all of them tangible to the mind, no matter how monstrous they are. Witches on broomsticks, or on pigs; animal compounds like the would-be mermaid; personified thoughts, and, death to the metaphysicians! abstract ones too; all these we allow as ekings-out of our sketch; as coherent increase of incoherency, become

familiarized, if not reconciled, to our mental habits.

"The most monstrous combinations of form or scenery in the drama, are fixed—*drawn:* and to do the same thing with them in the new language of the art, only required—what we have gained in Mr. Retch—a mind like Goethe's, swaying a pencil as obedient and ready to him, as the pen was to the poet. Here was no danger that a competent artist might have misinterpreted, or brought to a wrong definition, a half-expressed fancy, or half-hinted form: that he might have given us his own arbitrary lines, confusing, or too officiously determining shapes, of themselves arbitrary, or else shapeless; and consequently destructive of our first notions of the author."

CHAPTER XIX.

" A set o' dull, conceited hashes
Confuse their brains in college classes!"—

BURNS.

"PASSING one hundred pictures at least," said I—"how do you reverence Sir Thomas Lawrence?"

"A jot of reverence; but abundance of good-will and lively admiration. He was a kind of manly Chesterfield in the art. Then his subtle detail has never been excelled; never equalled, perhaps, but by Vandyke, though their manners are so different."

"Shall we compare him with Sir Joshua?"

"Not at all. There was nothing in common between them but genius; if we except the historical air Sir Thomas has occasionally sought, and with every success, to fling round his exquisite enumeration of small parts. A little like Vandyke, he is not at all like Sir Joshua,

whose characteristic, in contrast with the style we speak of, is bold, broad, and general truths. We might, indeed, call him a painter of principles; every sweep of his hand—we must not apply the other petty technical touch—was a principle. To get the three great portrait-painters together, one might describe Vandyke as a grave teller of minute facts; Sir Thomas as an ornamentalist and flatterer in the same strain; Sir Joshua as a philosopher, dealing in generals. The first a serious, and the second a pretty biographer—the third a historian."

"Let us not pass Haydon," said I.

"Certainly not; Haydon, the first historical painter of England, and unrivalled until our present era. There is his master-piece, Lazarus; sold, while he lived, and wanted the money, for less than four hundred pounds, and purchased for us at six thousand."

"Never appeared, on canvass," said Mr. Drudge, "a more judicious management of a highly poetical, and at the same time, dangerous conception, than that mysterious re-existence of the dead man. See—elevating himself in his winding sheet, he mechanically strives

to disengage it from his head, as, without consciousness he stares at the mysterious and splendid being, whose call has stirred him in the grave. The face still retains the sombre, nameless hue of death; the muscles are yet inert; re-animation scarce dawns over the features. It is terribly fine; yet not shocking."

"And see too," said Mr. Easel, "in what simple grandeur and beauty the Christ stands in profile, one arm resting by his side, and one easily raised, as he says—'Lazarus, come forth!' The whole figure is power in repose; omnipotence willing a miracle, not striving to effect it; and here you will recollect the contrary expression of Raphael's Creator, which we have just alluded to."

"By the way, though," resumed Mr. Drudge, "Haydon himself completely failed in this other face of Christ, in the Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem:—he has so toiled to divest it of human character, that he has left it none of any kind; for it does not follow that the absence of humanity is the presence of divinity."

"Is not this the picture," I asked, recurring to Lazarus, "in which Mr. Haydon said he

wanted to paint a—'Start?' Pray, shew me that in it."

Both gentlemen laughed, and Mr. Easel resumed: "Oh, yes; we have heard of Haydon's descriptive dissertations too; precious stuff! surely any of his friends might have told him how very ridiculous those showman propensities were; how useless, and how unworthy of his mind and professional character."

"Or he might have left such antic egotism to the French painter David," said Mr. Drudge, "who, in a painted description too, informs us that, when the picture of Napoleon's Coronation was finished, the Emperor advanced 'two steps,' to him, (M. David) and pulling off his little three-cocked hat, said, 'Sir, I salute you.'"

"Nor was it necessary," said Mr. Easel, "that the hero of Austerlitz should have been a connoisseur."

"Like Barry, Haydon thought to live by historical pictures," resumed Mr. Drudge, "in an age that, while it allowed in its churches* large crucifixes on large windows of stained

* At Westminster, for instance.

glass, refused to admit an artist's embellishments."

"Aye," said Mr. Easel, "and he sent in, from the King's Bench, a petition to parliament, praying encouragement for historical pictures. Why not first send it in to Lloyd's, Almack's, the Alfred, or the Farming or Bible Society?"

"Fuseli here?" I asked, stopping before his Night-Mare. Surely, to say little else of him, Fuseli is not an English artist. He owed the English school nothing."

"Then there was little owing on either side," said Mr. Easel.

"Kirk White—in every thing else the tasty Kirk White—indited an ode to him," said Mr. D. "But Fuseli only possessed the rarest elements of great genius, undirected by judgment or true professional learning. He painted, but it was in unearthly colours; he invented—Oh yes, I grant that. He used plainly to say that nature is not the purpose of an artist; and talk such gibberish, as that her works are abortions; that art can *create* better things; that Michael Angelo *did* create better things; and that Michael Angelo was 'a greater *man* than God Almighty!' He

used to eat raw beef, going to bed, to bring on indigestion and the night-mare, that he might waken to scare us, or make us laugh with the throes of a brain already overtortured."

"Yet you must own the immediate result, before which we now stand, is a good picture," said Mr. Easel.

"Yes," resumed the poet, "because it has happened, that to be so, it should also be extravagant and misshapen. But to be always hag-ridden with the same spirit of conception—to see our Shakspeare's delicate imagination twisted and knotted hard, as Fuseli has done it in his series from the Midsummer-night's Dream—this, my dear friends, is quite too bad. Can you tell me what was proposed by selecting him to rule over the studies of young English artists?"

"A leading member of the council, who elected him, said, he gave his vote that he might once again hear Fuseli lecture," answered Mr. Easel.

"That might have been an amusing motive to the individual, but does not look like a sense of duty, or a good prospective calculation. Fuseli was a great curiosity, I know. He should have been in the Museum, as well as any where else. Walcott defined him thus:—'The fittest

man alive to be appointed hob-goblin painter to the devil.'"

"Here is Shee, Jackson, Sir Wm. Beechey, and a score others I have been used to," said I.

"Shee will live as long in his 'Rhymes' as in his pictures," said Mr. Drudge.

"And Jackson longest in his surfaces, and Sir William in his mcguilps, and, in the memory of his friends, to the last generation," said the artist. "But do not pass these very sweet pictures by two American students, perfected in our school—Leslie and Newton; happy unions, both, of Wilkie and Watteau; the humour of the old Scot generally adapted to the costume of the foreigner. You perceive they chose subjects nearly alike; their manner is also something similar; though, if we were strongly to distinguish, we might say, that Leslie was most earnest after truth, and Newton most anxious to make an elegant impression in his style of telling it."

"By whom," I inquired, "is this Mazeppa, and those few bold and unfinished sketches?"

"By an Irish artist of much early promise—but, poor fellow! he allowed himself to be cut off in the flower of his youth. Come, now,

return we another day to the face-and-figure-men; and, for the present, let us have one look at our landscapes; the region of art, in which we teach the world; though even through them we must post rapidly too.

"See our Claude, Wilson; our unique Turner, whose early pictures were real glories, though he afterwards became turgid or conceited. Cool yourself in Collins's morning lights, and walk over his fresh strands, or through his green depths of tree and dell. Measure Calcott's interminable volumes of clouds, or breathe his delightful atmosphere, or saunter abroad in his spreading daylight; or wander with Martin to the tops of mountains two thousand and one miles off, or down the eternal dream of heads in his Belshazzar's Hall; or try to measure his giant column 'on Shinar's plain,' where the spectral immensity swims in liquid distance, and swathed in clouds, as if with their envy."

"You may if you like," remarked Mr. Drudge, "laugh at his grotesque or ill-scratched figures, and wonder how the human mind can be fashioned so awfully unequal as to allow the same man to invent and execute those sublimities and those crudities. They limp, or straddle, or crawl

over his noble landscapes, or through his wonderful architecture, that Piranesi might dream, but could not build, like impish abortions let loose to disfigure and disturb the silent grandeur of a primitive world."

"Or," Mr. Easel rejoined, "if you wish to get a distinct idea of Martin gone mad, behold this other piece of variegated canvass—Adam and Eve entertaining the Angel Raphael—which, as an unrivalled curiosity, we preserve. Claude and N. Poussin, together, might modestly have ventured on such a subject; but the painter of the foreground of 'Pompeii,' or of the starved creatures—like mice in a lofty church—huddled together before the mighty magnificence of Babylon,—he, never. Observe the close-scene of — suppose, trees. Groups and groups of *ideal foliage*, bottle-green and grass-green, yellow and orange, blue, scarlet, and pink. The immediate foreground is like the front of a chemist's shop. And this is paradise! Certainly not the paradise of painters. I shall not say a word about the figures; but I should like to invite all declaimers for self-producing and self-maturing genius to stand before this picture. Here is a work arranged and

painted out of the schools; here are no benumbing proprieties, no tameness of hand, no insipid correctness of figure-drawing. Mr. Martin was no academician."

"Well," said I, "you must at all events admit that academies have done little good; all the great names in art grew up without them."

"Aha!" said Mr. Easel, smiling, "have we Hiram here? I am to suppose, sir, that you are of the class of philosophers who have interested themselves so much about the arts? Be it so, then; we thank you heartily for your solicitude, at least; as, indeed, time out of mind, philosophy has been affected almost to pathos on our account.

"Allow me, however, to resist the sweeping sentence you have just pronounced on academies. Angelo and Raphael are good names in art; yet, if Roscoe is authority, they studied, along with others of eminence, in an academy formed by Leo. X. Le Brun, La Theyre, and Canova, have been matured in academies. Sir Thomas Lawrence was the child of the English school. Opie was matured by it. He was a painter in Cornwall; but when he first came to London he was only a Cornwall man. Mr. Shee

could not, for years, get his pictures exhibited at Somerset-house; in London he painted himself up to London; and, at last, died, an accomplished artist, and an unfortunate senior academician."

"But academies paralyze genius," said I.

"If so, it would follow, that after having once breathed their deleterious atmosphere, artists should paint worse than they did before. Does this appear? Was Wilkie's 'Chelsea Pensioners' worse than his diploma picture of the Rat-hunt, or Sir Joshua's or Sir Thomas's latter pictures worse than *their* diploma ones?"

"But it is the young artist, the student, that academies particularly injure: they cripple his free thoughts, and tame his ardour; they substitute rigid mediocrity for original daring, in fact."

"I hope, my good sir," continued Mr. Easel, "you have sufficiently considered the difference between the qualifications necessary for expressing thoughts, or manifesting genius, in painting and in poetry. The artist, no matter what may be his natural power, in the first place requires a positive mechanism of hand, in order to get out a single idea; the poet, so far as the hand

is concerned, need not know even how to write. Years of hard study are indispensable in the one case, for what is merely a preparative facility; not an hour is demanded in the second case. The poet by nature can communicate his ideas the moment he is acquainted with the ordinary compass of ordinary language; the painter by nature must wait till he masters a new and most difficult language. The common education of a hedge-school, or the years of boyhood, are enough to give speech to the one; the other is tongue-tied until he becomes initiated into a complex round of acquirement, which, with every opportunity, cannot be reached before the age of mature manhood. Hence we have had poets at seventeen, or at the tail of the plough, but never a painter. Hence Burns, or Kirk White, Chatterton or Dermody, could captivate us in obscurity or in boyhood, while Opie was obliged to come to London, and, before he could be equally successful, study and wait.

"Since, then, to become an intelligible painter, a long course of mechanical acquirement cannot be dispensed with, the only question seems to be—how shall that course be run in

the speediest and least deviating manner? If you leave the student completely to himself—if you lock him up to his own ideas, and nature, and never allow him to see what means others have used, he would spend a long life in going only a few steps on the road to excellence. He could never get farther than, where, in the infancy of the art, the first clever adventurer had stopped. This, I am sure, is not your plan. But you would give him his liberty, and let him observe and try to analyze the result of all successful efforts before him. Without master or check, you would allow him to form his own arbitrary interpretations and solutions of all the difficulty and mystery of art. Might he not sometimes go wrong? Might he not, in travelling from an effect to a cause, sometimes imagine a wrong cause? Might he not spend much of his time in experiments that a skilful guide could enable him to avoid?—Perhaps, then, you would give him a master, and (still keeping him far from the baneful region of an academy) permit him to attend that master, from day to day, in his private painting-room. Is there no danger of mannerism here? No danger of his adopting the hand of his favourite master, or of looking at

nature through another man's eyes?—Suppose there is not; and suppose his master accomplished, and all that is desirable—what harm could there be in giving him two clever masters instead of one? What harm in three, or four? And now suppose him under the alternate guidance of three or four, removed from the private painting-room to an academy—what contingent injury is obvious? Would he be 'paralyzed' by comparing ideas with his class-fellows? The world allows that much is learned in that way. Would it prove destructive, if you surrounded him with all the select and concentrated means for getting on, in the most rapid pace, and in the straightest line, instead of leaving those means strewed widely around him in a chance and devious path?"

"In fact, sir, I should like to know what the metaphysicians wish academies of art to do.—If they mean that we should supply a periodical crop of Raphaels, as a gardener his periodical crop of cabbages, I answer, we have not professed so much. Academies do not engage to make genius; they only engage to make artists; and, where the student happens to possess true natural power, then an artist of genius. They

covenant to clear the way for a clever student, or to point out the shortest one; to furnish him with facilities instead of experiments, axioms instead of hypotheses; to concentrate the experiments of others, that from them he may deduce certainty, or, at least, escape numerous uncertainties.

"But, on this topic, a painter always loses time. As I said, we must again recur to our gallery of native painting, when passing justice may be done to many good cotemporaries of those we have already considered, as well as to the chain of artists from 1823 to our day. Now are you for our gallery of native sculpture?"

CHAPTER XX.

" I lose my patience, and I own it too,
When works are censured, not as bad, but new."

POPE.

" Fetch forth the stocks, ho!—
You stubborn, ancient knave, you reverend braggart,
We'll teach you——"

SHAKSPEARE.

ENTERING the gallery, I saw Chantrey's Child and Dove, Westmacott's Houseless Wanderer, and Baily's Eve, in a group: after which were fine continuations of the same kind of subject by Behnes, and other succeeding artists. Very few gods or goddesses, or mere scholastic figures, found a place.

" You see the works, sir," said Mr. Easel, pausing before the first group, " that have formed the present high character of British sculpture. Their authors did not sit down to a twentieth adaptation of a Grace, a Hebe, or a Venus. They did not think with Canova

that a plain republican general, in the back settlements of America, could only be dignified by investing him with the classic toga and sandals. They saw no necessity that every man, woman, and child, created by the chisel, should be Grecians; as, in their age, the Duke of Wellington was a naked Grecian, by proxy, in Hyde Park; Bonaparte, a colossal Grecian at —(perhaps tastefully)—the foot of his grace's staircase at Apsley House; and even good old George III. a Grecian, in a Homerian car, drawn by four incarnate devils of horses. Beauty and grace, the objects of the chisel, they thought confined to no costume or cast of character."

"Still I am for a standard," said Mr. Drudge.

"And willing that chance should dictate your exclusive law of taste?" said Mr. Easel. "What would you do if sculpture had never travelled out of Egypt, amongst the fine, yet accidental helps of Greece? or suppose it had originated at Pekin, and that Athens had never been civilized? I repeat that if nature cannot be rendered impressive to our eyes in any mode in which she is herself impressive; if a first-rate painter or sculptor fail to interest and delight us by using accompaniments in which nature is

interested and delighted, painting or sculpture is not, in that case, the high art we have mistaken it for, and no artist is great. I contend that Washington, in the noble situation of penning his farewell to the people and sovereignty he had liberated and acquired, must have been a noble subject, costume and all; in other words, his costume must not have lessened him in the opinion of a spectator of the real scene; and why could not Canova perpetuate the same man in the same costume? In fact, with his toga, and kelt, and sandals, Canova has given us another individual, another identity altogether.

"Let me not be supposed to undervalue in the minutest degree the almost divinity of the old classic models, or to deny the great aids derivable at all times from them. But I must observe of the first point, that their highest attribute is their originality; of the second, that they are best consulted as the authors of those beautiful modern works have consulted them. They loved and studied, and dwelt upon the old models, but they did not pour their minds into their moulds; they rather decomposed them into elements, and in such a shape

they became any man's property. This was genius.

"Look at the Eve," continued Mr. Easel. "What, in the first place, can the subject want of that unmixed sentiment of beauty, (divinity, if you will,) that painters and sculptors of all ages have laboured to abstract?—The whole of time is between us and it, and the convulsions and grossness of a world. She is a happy creature, in paradise, in youth, in perfect beauty, immortal and human, sinless, and made to love and be loved,—the pure shape of an idea existing from eternity in the eternal mind. Again, examine this mother and child. I grant the subject not so high, according to rule; it is only human subject; but such humanity!—The deep responses of feeling are no testimony for art, if this work is inferior, simply because the woman is not a goddess or a demirep: and beauty has but one mode if it is not beautiful. See the nestling of that tender, unconscious child, under those young breasts, whose milk is sorrow, and on those twining arms and hands. The forlorn mother has been looking on her infant, and turns away her head to sigh a long-drawn sigh: it is coming up from the depths of her breaking heart; the marble heaves in agony.

"These, sir, are the things that have extended into time, and multiplying in their own beauty and truth, at last convinced the hearts and judgments of men, and made the present proud character of British sculpture."

"They had not such advocates in their own day," said I.

"No," said Mr. Easel, "I am aware that our then self-exiled connoisseurs at Rome affected to sneer at Chantrey, and knew nothing of Westmacott or Baily, while it was their vanity to puff up all foreign artists. To English noblemen and gentlemen,* exclusively, Canova and Thorswalden were indebted for their first fame, and by one Englishman† the latter artist was supplied with money at a time when the want of it must have clouded, perhaps for ever, his professional prospects. These matters I mention with full praise for the liberal patrons, and with joy for the sake of the artists: yet we must remark that "charity begins at home;" at all events, that the fine expanding genius of

* To Sir William Hamilton and Lord Cawdor, in the first instance; afterwards to Sir Henry Blundell, Mr. Latouch, and many others.

† Mr. Thomas Hope.

their native land claimed a division of the generosity of British subjects."

"Yet this contempt of native art," said Mr. Drudge, "may be accounted for, without attributing any very reprehensible motive. Its cause was only ignorance. The advance of sculpture, in England, we find to have been amazingly slow; more so than the advance of painting, though *that* was slow enough."

"I believe," said I, "statues were always after pictures, in every country; and, perhaps, they require—to be understood and felt,—longer acquaintance with the art, and greater maturity of mind than their more attractive brethren:"—and here I recollected Hazlitt's admission, that before he could like statues, he was for years a picture worshipper: and I also brought to mind having heard the author of "The Pleasures of Hope" say, that,—(notwithstanding his beautiful simile drawn from the Rhodian's mimic art,) —he could comprehend nothing of your "stone ideal," until in advanced life, he saw the Apollo Belvidere at the upper end of the Louvre. "I walked slowly up to it," said Mr. Campbell, "half incredulous, half curious. At last I stood before it, and in one look, was a convert. 'A

new and delightful feeling agitated me. I was affected; I wept."

Following up Mr. Drudge's, and my remark, Mr. Easel went on.—"Yes, Vandyke had set a splendid example to native talent before our first resident sculptor, Cibber, the dramatist's father, came over here from Holland at the restoration. After him flourished Rysbrack and Roubillac, about Bernini's time; and nearly the same kind of bad French taste that he grafted on the fine stock of old art on the continent, they introduced as a root and a novelty to England."

"A strong instance of the backwardness of sculpture in this country I believe I recollect," said Mr. Drudge. "In an appeal by Wren to Queen Anne, against the caballing of the commissioners of St. Paul's, he states that he had employed 'a very able statuary' to execute her majesty's statue, intended for the front of his great cathedral. Whoever the artist was,—Cibber perhaps—we now possess and know the merits of the work he spoke of; and it is monstrous proof of the disproportionate growth of architecture and sculpture in England, when such an accompaniment could be deemed worthy

of a place at St. Paul's; and also of the ignorance of the public mind in sculpture, when so great a man as Wren in other respects was, could imagine her petticoated majesty the production of a very able statuary."

"You lead me to my point," said Mr. Easel. "The growth of the general mind could only be as the growth of the art itself: nay, behind it, for art must become eminent before we can understand what is meant by its eminence. At the era of 1823, there was, I take it, little true taste for sculpture, though there was much fine sculpture in England; because the connoisseur had not yet been afforded time to keep pace with the artist. But it was universally good to talk of, and to purchase statues. Every body knew and felt this. Again; every body knew that Italy was the region for art, although few dared to assert the same thing of England. The established faith and taste were on the one side; it might be infidelity to believe in an English statue. Hence the early munificence of our high and wealthy was lavished on foreign art, and until judgment and feeling became as widely diffused as genius, our fine creations were almost unnoticed.

"But I have not yet shewn you our gallery of old masters," Mr. Easel continued; leading us into the apartment.

"Why," said I, "this used to be under the wing of the British Institution."

"A simple process of logic has, however, proved to us that no body of men can govern any exhibition of pictures, so well as those whose business it is to understand them better than the world beside: we shall say nothing of the proper *seasons* for bringing the old masters under the public eye, or for administering them to students."

"Pray, Mr. Easel," said I, "what am I to think of Schalken and the Bassans, and twenty others?"

"What you like. Old masters are not now such awful and difficult things. At one time I know they formed so numerous a mythology, that people's devotions were rather distracted with them. But heretical professors had contrived to impose themselves on the general credulity, and devotees and false doctrines had multiplied gods and heroes; as, in the days of heathenism, Juvenal complained that the shoulders of Atlas were not able to bear up the pro-

digious increase of deities. We have, however, lately revised the calendar, and shorn many an ancient head of its quack divinity. There has been a general conclave of painters, sir, assembled at the Louvre, who, day after day, discussed and fixed the pretensions to immortality of all the old masters; and in due time agreed upon, and under sanction of their respective governments, published an authentic form of creed, which all liege subjects, including the old picture-brokers, are now bound to adopt and practise."

"That's hard enough on the old picture-brokers," said I.

"Why, it *was*, while such a race of hags existed; but they have almost entirely disappeared in the two last generations. The laws of the land against them were severe; and at last, like the ancient edict against wolves and otters, succeeded. Your old picture-broker, if discovered in his superstitious traffic, was sentenced to stand in a public place, with a patched robe and painted cap, stitched up out of his secreted rubbish of rotten canvasses; and there, with a lighted candle in his hand, ask pardon, in a loud voice, of all true painters; while the younger stu-

dents, with callipers, mallets, malsticks, meguilp and pound-brushes of asphaltum, assembled round him, using what freedoms they fancied."

"*Pro sancte Jupiter!* but it was a rare sentence, and a proper," said I, as we left the Royal Academy together.

CHAPTER XXI.

"It would be a daft-like thing to see me wi' my fat wame in a short coat." ROB ROY.

IN passing along the street with my polite friends, I slightly remarked that no placards of private exhibitions of "Mr. Such-a-one's *great* picture of this or that," were to be seen; although I expected them, from what I had read concerning the usages of former times.

"No," Mr. Easel replied. "The British parliament, once resolved to afford every proper facility to the culture of true art and true taste, had thought itself bound to save both from the quackery and spoliation of all such pretenders. It was no longer legal for a vain or presumptuous young man to cover the end wall of a long room with a huge piece of canvass, hoist placards through town, and in every way announce himself as a superior attraction. As theatres were all along licensed, so, now, were

exhibitions of art. And a barrier, Mr. Easel thought, was thus thrown up around the national character of the profession, and also around the gradual and wholesome growth of national taste and feeling for it. The public mind was not now at the mercy of the whole world, to come forward, one by one, in the assumed characters of first-rate painters, and sow in it the seeds of false and corrupting opinion. After a visit to the Great Rooms of the Royal Academy, an amateur, anxious to acquire fit notions in, to him, a new and difficult study, might go home unmolested, and allow his observations to take root at leisure; running no hazard of getting them plucked out by the unseasonable intrusion of contrary ideas, derived from a view of a very different kind of art."

After this I inquired with some earnestness, whether or not a particular piece of sculpture, (a monumental trophy, intended, in my time, to have been erected to the memory of George III.) was known in England? I became naturally anxious to hear if Mr. Wyatt was indeed the Phidias Mr. Croly's eloquent speech at the meeting would make him. I felt, that if I had not the word itself as guarantee, I had the word

of a minister of the word, and of a tragic poet into the bargain. There was once a good deal of bustle and interest about the whole matter; it was very amusing and exciting to me; and so I resolved to be satisfied.

Mr. Easel answered, that the work had, indeed, been put up, some two hundred years before, but, within the last century, taken down again.

I asked why, and the artist thus proceeded:

"Without the slightest want of reverence to the memory of the good monarch, sir, or indeed, to the artist, but rather out of full respect to both; at the same time, that by destroying such a monument, we got rid of a thing that might have been construed, though falsely, into evidence of a most lamentable state of art at the period of its erection.

"The design, I believe, was not the artist's, whose name I forget, but dictated to him by a committee of private gentlemen; therefore he was not accountable for it. But, why a few amateurs should take on themselves thus to cater for a portion of our historical character as a nation, seems to me very extraordinary. Had they proposed to adorn one of their own private

galleries, it would have been of little importance how the matter was arranged. But, when it was intended to make such a work public property, and when they speculated on its transmission to future ages, the highest and most matured talent of the sculptors of their time ought certainly to have been called into action upon it. A fine arts monument is always witness to the people of a succeeding time of the mind of that particular time in which it was set up. After the lapse of two or three hundred years, posterity, and their contemporaries of other nations, will not pause to recollect—even if they shall have the means of ascertaining,—that it was only in the taste of my Lord This, or Mr. That. The whole country will be visited with the criticism that ought to fall on a few only."

"What are your objections to the design in good earnest?", said I, "I thought it 'very *chaste* and *classical.*'"

"You did? It is thus told. 'George the Third stands in a triumphal car, drawn by four galloping and plunging horses, who are trampling a hydra, and accompanied by two female figures, Fame and Victory.' The first is, (essentially,) blowing a trumpet, and the second

about to crown the king with her chaplet. Now, let us say a word. Supposing the head of the monarch was a likeness, and, for that reason, recognizable by the general spectator, still I am at a loss to know how his majesty's situation was to be accounted for by any simple citizen. It might have been supposed, indeed, that he was driving to Windsor, or proceeding in state to the House: but, then, there seemed no reason for putting him bolt upright in a pulpit, instead of leaving him at ease in his own comfortable coach; for making his horses run away with him, or for throwing between the feet of his horses a mad dog, or a strange wild beast, escaped from Exeter-Change. As for the two females, who, racing at either side, kept pace with the horses, one of them might well be thought to represent the crazy woman who once made an attempt on the king—at a proper distance, the trumpet could easily be taken for the case-knife.

"Very seriously we have no reverence for the taste that clothes our good old George the Third in a Diomede cloak and short petticoat, and leaves him in a heroic car at the mercy of four unharnessed wild horses. The subject is

not naturally put. It is a cold, thread-bare conceit; and, in reference to the British nation, a far-fetched and incongruous one. The materials of which it is composed would have produced a good effect in Greece, three thousand years ago; Fame and Victory were deities in her mythology, and their personification would have been understood by the superstitious eye of the nation. But, in England, and in the nineteenth century, professing a Christian creed, and, while it was proposed to commemorate the reign of the most pious of our sovereigns, could there not have been adopted any more natural design for such a monument than that unavoidably used by a heathen artist, in a heathen time, and in elucidation of his ideas to a heathen people?"

CHAPTER XXII.

" The little lines of yesterday."

ROGERS.

So much for professional criticism on pictures and picture-makers: but the printed remarks were more learned and voluminous, though it is not my intention to transcribe a word of them. It was, indeed, a noble harvest-home for the daily and periodical men; and, how they did puff and labour, and fall foul of each other! putting in their sickles here and there, and everywhere; no two of them cutting in a row, or together—such indiscriminate levelling as they made of it!—such crossing and jangling of their crooked weapons!

But after all I heard every body say on the intrinsic merit of pictures, I still found myself lingering about the exhibition-room; getting in among a knot of painters in a corner, and listening with unwearied earnestness to their shop-scandal or anecdote; or I made a sortie from a

good picture to the painting-room of the artist, and investigated at home, and in his native element, the curious animal who had pleased, affected, or surprised me, in certainly the most abstruse language by which strong impressions can be conveyed to the mind. I peered into the dark recess of his room, among fragments of casts lay figures, skulls, oil-bottles, brushes, and colour-bladders, out of which a nursery-ridden child might conjure up a stirring host of wild and terrific imagery. These things I regard with a kind of mysterious awe and reverence. They lie scattered, to my observation, like the wreck of a battle-field, stubbornly contested and gloriously won; or, like the terrible paraphernalia of some wondrous chemist, by whom the mined and central secrets of the globe have been brought to light, and the spirits of the vasty deep itself startled through the depths of their Stygian obscurity.

——"penetratque in Tartara rimis
Lumen, et infernum terret cum conjuge regem!"

I see a plaster-cast of a hand or leg, which may have assisted the artist in reducing to shape the throes and visions of his early conception;

nay, in some remote angle, or from behind some slanting piece of canvass, the first broad dash of his now detailed subject comes through twilight on my view, as the faint indications of difficult truth to the mind. I behold, possibly, the very pallet which has yielded the last glowing, breathing tints to his immortal picture; the very pencil that has conferred the last convincing touch of character and expression, both still loaded with the material of that very creation; the seeds and atoms out of which this mortal god has wrought his wondrous mould of mimic life, action, and sentiment.

As the artist himself furnishes ample scope for my speculation, I measure with my optical callipers the breadth of his temporal bones, the projection of his sinuses, the dip of his chin, the elongation of his occiput, or the angle of his lower maxillary. I want to see how far he is like his picture; a similarity, by the way, that occurs less frequently than we could wish, between either artists and their pictures, or poets and their books. Goethe, Byron, Moore, and Wordsworth, were admitted to be like in this respect; particularly Mooré, whose eye, sometimes clouded in a dreamy luxury, and some-

times flashing like a gem, was the counterpart of his songs. It was said, that Scott was like; I could never think so; with his small head, his scrap of chin, and his sidelong clever look: but I saw only a good bust of Scott. Wordsworth, too, I never yet beheld; but, Haydon's head of him in the 'Triumphal Entry,' was very like the 'Excursion.' Campbell should never have written the 'Hohenlinden.' As to some of the painters that came under my view, Sir Thomas was exactly the man to produce the most courtier-like pictures in the world, and now and then to tire you with them. Wilkie much more resembled the 'Rent Day,' or the 'Pensioners,' than Shee his own waxen-surfaced portraits. The unaffected nationality in face, and, indeed, accent of the one, was more convincing than the rather ostentatious upholding of brogue and *brusquerie* of the other. Haydon had not a look of the author of Lazarus. But Mr. Briggs, the author of Guy Faux, and such subjects, seemed as solid and as good, and with just as little character or vivacity as his pictures. Martin was only a handsome faced man with tiny features; a parallel to Mr. Lockhart, the successful author of Peter's Letters, and successful wooer

of Sir Walter's daughter. Chantrey and Fuseli, however, were the image of themselves; the one with a grand, broad, well balanced, apostolic head; the other liny and devious, in his face and figure—unique, unearthly, and elfish looking.

But the most delightful coincidence between painter and picture I have seen was old Northcote: old and transformed as he was when under the guidance of a friend, an artist, too, I first entered his curious painting-room. A little, a very little and wasted old man stood, almost sturdily, before us, in a very little blue spotted cotton morning-gown, but with a volume of transparent forehead, a jetty eye, and every other feature a point. I saw the daring author of those early pictures that have ennobled the name of the artist. In all other respects, too, he was intensely interesting. He was of our age, yet did not belong to it; like the present Now, he seemed to bound the past, and we lived in him, though we scarcely possessed him. He knew the Goldsmiths, the Johnsons, the Burkes, the Reynoldses. He was the intimate, domestic friend of Sir Joshua, and spoke of him as one he had just been visiting in the next street;

and, in so familiar and natural a way, that it was almost startling. How delightful to hear his manner of *proof* that Reynolds wrote the lectures!—Mr. Northcote often saw him at work on them, and, once or twice picked off the carpet, scraps of discarded manuscript, that had been copied out, and that afterwards were spoken and printed. Then came his story of Sir Joshua suddenly making love to a beautiful and amiable lady, an old friend, who was one day sitting to him. The unpractised wooer, entering too abruptly and energetically on his declaration, frightened the lady; and she screamed, and ran into the next room, where her female companion was looking at some pictures, and hid her face in her lap. This is the Northcote that Hazlitt loves to hint at; and who used to say to him, with a glitter of eye, and a curve about his mouth, that would have been worthy of Voltaire in his best day—"Now, don't forestal me, Mr. Hazlitt." He could talk of his own art, and of every thing else, better, or in a more original or captivating way, than any one in the world beside. He said the very best things, and the severest: and did them too. He once turned out of his painting-room a

young prince of the blood, who thought to trot him for the amusement of a clever companion. He hated most cordially and vehemently all species of affectation, and used to call it "*the acting of a lie.*"

I have mentioned the kind of curiosity which, when left to myself, I feel about the arts; and I have recurred to instances of its gratification among the people of my old world, in order to give the present reader a just, though general notion, of the way in which I sought to indulge it on the faces, persons, and conversation of the painters to come. For their productions I also entertained an interest, peculiarly my own. I asked questions, indifferently, and in as simple a manner as possible, but which had, indirectly, an important operation; and word by word, and sentence by sentence, extracted an account of each artist's mode of going about a subject, and treating it, and working it up, and finishing it: together with a variety of little domestic incidents attached to its growth, that, I have the popular egotism to think, no man of less enthusiasm and perseverance than myself could have collected in the given time. As these particulars of eminent men and clever works, that have

not yet been eminent or clever, would, however, have little interest for the readers of this early world, I decline communicating them; satisfying myself with shewing, in parallel cases belonging to our actual existence, the nature of the information I have treasured up; as, indeed, in my past, present, and future life, I have been equally ardent in my chase after the anecdotes of the painting-room.

How few, except myself, then, know any thing of the "Chelsea Pensioners," but that it is a beautiful picture, an extraordinary picture, a divine picture, and so forth!—One masculine critic, indeed, has stept forward to say, that Wilkie committed a serious anachronism by painting oysters in June; and, having said, he stept back again; and I heard, myself, a dapper counting-house connoisseur, in a cravat and top-boots, remark, that the candle-snuff was as natural as the life; and, then he turned away, and accompanied his creaking boots to another side of the room. But, apart from these discoveries, there is a prison-house secret, connected with the picture, well worth knowing.

In chapter sixteen, Mr. Drudge has already described the chief actor and action of the

story; where the poor soldier's wife rushes up to seek for her husband's name among the list of killed and wounded. At the first view, and while it strikes and overpowers us, we naturally regard the incident as one of those emanations of genius, of which even genius is seldom capable; whose birth is like the flash—instantaneous, involuntary. Yet, we should go wrong in such a reading. The idea of this sublime passage was not rapid or impulsive, or coeval with Wilkie's first plan of his subject. It was, in truth, an after-thought, an interlineation. I cannot presume to say, that the place it now holds was, at first, a blank; but it was preoccupied by another actor, or a different event. A woman who had been listening to an account of the battle of Waterloo, as read by the old pensioner, and who had just heard some fatal intelligence of her husband, was fainting away at the news, her eyes half closed, and her whole action quietness itself. It is needless to point out how unlike this was to the energy and stretch of feeling of the passage, as it now stands. No doubt the original conception was full of simple pathos, yet mere bye-play to the dramatic importance of the substitute one.

Is it not curious to observe in what an arbi-

trary way the scintillations of genius condescend to transmit themselves? Sometimes blazing forth at once through the profound of the mind, like a meteor, or careering comet; sometimes just appearing like a small star half seen in an evening sky, that you must keep your eye upon, and give your whole attention to, before you can hatch it out into distinct brightness. In one mood, a thought comes to the gifted intellect, panting and out of breath, with eagerness to be received and embodied; at another time it will lurk from view, and hide in a corner, rejecting all your amorous overtures; and at last, either entirely elude you, or convey itself, part by part, bit by bit, till invention is disgusted with her own petty, piece-meal industry. Give up the chase; affect, or really feel indifference, and, like a true woman, the coquet-muse will anon throw herself into your arms, when you least think of her. Without any seeming association, the long sought idea will burst over the slumbering mind. Nay, chance itself often gives a clue, after which genius had toiled in vain. Leonardo da Vinci attributes to the accidental discolouring and stains on the walls of a room, some of the best landscapes. Every

body knows that Apelles had been labouring for months to express the foam issuing from the mouth of a proud war-horse, and could not please himself; till, at last, in a sudden fit of pettishness, he flung his pencil, surcharged with colour, at the portrait of the animal's head; it struck about the mouth,—and lo! the thing was done.

Passing from single ideas to the arrangement of an entire work in painting, it is still more interesting to note the complicated process, the remote and subtle combinations, the twistings, the twinings, and the turnings to which men of genius sometimes have recourse, in order to produce the whole and harmonious transcript of their first thought. And now, while Wilkie is before us, nothing can be easier than to surprise, at least, with an account of some part of his method of getting his pictures before him.

Even the little misses who read this will recollect the box, with the ring at the top, in which Glumdalclitch carried her darling Gulliver, when she went out, or put him to sleep on her lap, when she came home. Well. I do not exactly know, whether or not Wilkie makes any loose sketch of his subject, before the circumstance I

am about to describe; but certain it is, that when he has got the first general impression of it in his brain, he then provides such a little box; furnishes the inside with chairs, tables, a cupboard, a clock, doors, windows, stools, and all the other etceteras necessary to the kind of apartment he wishes to express on his canvass: and also, in every way snug and fit for the reception of a Lilliputian company. This done, he then introduces the pigmy inhabitants themselves, clothed as nearly as possible in the costume he is anxious to preserve, and puts them sitting down, or standing up, or turned this way, or that, and otherwise grouped, as he deems fit for his purpose. The light he wishes streams in from a particular window; and the room, furniture, and figures all catch the effect of *chiaro-scuro* that the artist may have previously designed, or that is thus, perhaps, suggested to him. Through a hole in the box, which we may technically call his point of sight, Wilkie then peers inquisitively upon the private family affairs of those harmless little people; and, having, by his fancy, set them into action, proceeds to paint and immortalize them. The figures are the size of those eventually exhi-

bited in the artist's picture; so are the chairs, tables, and all. He scarcely ever deviates from the relative proportions before his eye, and, owing to this, some odd oversights may be remarked in his most celebrated works. In one you may observe a cupboard, to which no individual of the race could reach; and in another a clock that none of them could wind up without the aid of a step-ladder.

At the first glance, one is tempted to call all this too trite, too tricky, too mechanical, for a man of genius. I will call it curious, curious; and if required to deliver any other opinion, I shall be silent. Without doubt, such a mode, in the practice of an indifferent painter, would appear almost contemptible; certainly, laughable and ridiculous. But I feel I have no more right to criticise the means by which Wilkie chooses to work out his effect, than I should have to quarrel with the manufacturing of a fine day or a beautiful flower, supposing me to know how either were made, and pleased to be critical on the process. That this method assists Wilkie is plain, I think. It must materially serve his distribution of light and shade, and his grouping. His ideas of general colour may also be regu-

lated by it; and if his Lilliputian upholsterer had half an hour's converse with his Lilliputian builder, perhaps one should not meet any further want of proportion in his accompaniments.

Sir Thomas Lawrence has painted and exhibited a pretty portrait, called the Little Red Riding Hood. Now, that is a wonderful, quite a romance kind of portrait. Horace Walpole, in his Castle of Otranto, treated us to the figure of an old warrior, which, when it liked, could step out of the picture, leaving the back ground behind, and beckon to its grandson to follow. The Little Red Riding Hood cannot do this, and indeed, never did this; but she has done things almost as extraordinary. She grew up, as a picture, from an infant, to her present height and age. She was first a short, fat, chubby child, confined to a scrap of canvass; and so lay by, many years, in Sir Thomas's room. Anon, she became an interesting little girl, with her head running over the first canvass, into another scrap tacked on for her accommodation. In a year or two more, she grew half a foot taller, and the canvass grew with her; and so both have been going on, until they arrived at the years and stature in which they now appear,

I could instance many more of my rare anecdotes of new pictures, but that, together with my fears of a long chapter, I wish to conclude by allusion to an old picture. I mean the celebrated "Misers," painted by Quintin Matsys, sometimes called, the Blacksmith of Antwerp. Once on a time, he was, indeed, a blacksmith, and the history of himself and his Misers is singular.

He and a beautiful girl of Antwerp loved each other: but peculiar circumstances interfered between them. Her father had sworn, or vowed, that his daughter should wed no person but an artist. What was to be done? Poor Quintin had never imitated any thing beyond the curve of a horse's hoof; and even that in a style and material that might well be called "hard." His pencil the sledge, the most delicate touch of his hand had hitherto been lavished on the anvil. But Quintin loved: an obstacle was to be surmounted; and what will not love surmount?—He commenced the study of the art; he persevered, and succeeded. He produced two pictures, and won his mistress. One is the Misers. Another I have seen is either falsely attributed to him, or it is not one

of those two; he was not in love when he painted it.

But of the Misers there can be no doubt. And this identical picture we may all behold and touch! this emanation, through the prismatic medium of art, of the tenderest and most romantic of passions!—the first rich harvest of an habitually sterile mind, that love had reclaimed and cultivated to genius! Over this very canvass the inspired lover has toiled, in the feverish earnestness of hope and fear, love and ambition. Over this very canvass the calculating connoisseur father has leaned, with critic bend of brow, with critic spectacles on nose, and wrapped in a horrid silence that was to be broken with a death-sentence to the hopes of an enamoured enthusiast, or with the one talismanic word, that should give him life and happiness, love, fame, and victory!

Let us here remember that love had previously done much more than this for the arts. If the ostentatious Greeks are to be believed, Venus rocked the cradle of the "dumb poesy." Their legend or history of the Corinth maid is well known. But, true or false, it is a beautiful, an affecting story. No spirit, but the spirit of

love should have presided over the birth of an art, whose tireless pursuit is in the search of beauty, and the essence of whose ambition is also the essence of love itself.

What has become of that lump of clay which, in our recollections, is immortal? which, modified by the hand of the happy girl, presented the first startling specimen of a new existence? Could we contemplate it as we do the Blacksmith's picture; could we touch it, and touch and investigate it again and again, what peculiar associations would hover around! how delicious, how hallowed would be our consciousness!

CHAPTER XXIII.

" Masters, here are your parts."
Midsummer Night's Dream.

" *Hor.* My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.
Ham. I prithee do not mock me, fellow-student."
Hamlet.

HAVING described the chief exhibitions, sights, and performances, of the people of 2023, it will be in course to allude to their minor ones.

Of these then, I have first to remark that the May sweeps, and the Michaelmas City-show, still flourished in the rival splendour of cocked hats and gold leaf: but the naval expedition that periodically made part of a Lord Mayor's jubilee, had, for some time been omitted, in consequence of serious disasters resulting to the aldermen and their ladies from rough weather on the river. Punch and patriotism, the saints and the tumblers, were not so general. Exhibitions of the busts of great people, as well as of the antique, were, however, kept up in the shop-windows of peruke-makers; such busts,

not used, indeed, as mere wig-blocks, for upon these the ordinary run of wigs was hung; but, as an eminent hair-dresser informed me, for the purpose of shewing to perfection the newest fashioned perukes; and he added, that a delicate, though indirect flattery was thus paid to the distinguished individuals themselves, by making their heads the patrons, as it were, of the rarest productions of one of the imitative arts. I record it as a fact,* that the same gentleman grew rather indignant with me, when I ventured to inquire why he had not thus appropriated the busts of some public characters, entitled, I thought, to that honor; the public notions with respect to them had changed, it seemed; and the *peruquier* assured me with much energy, that no such heads should ever wear a wig of his invention. And thus it is, that genius and station at last come in for arbitrary opinion in every rank; though, perhaps, it formed no part of the laudable ambition of Demosthenes, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Joseph Hume, or the Duke of Wellington, to calculate—whatever might have been the eye of some of them, to a corner in "The Abbey," or in St. Paul's—upon

* Fact, indeed.

rejection from or elevation to a niche in the window of a barber's shop; nor could the author of the Niobe family have anticipated the same familiar popularity for one member of his immortal group; though, even at present we may see them all suffering their usual agonies under a false front, or a male wig *à la Brutus*, or *à la Titus*.

Exhibitions of ladies' faces, necks, and arms, were perpetuated at the Opera-house; a pretence of understanding the performance serving, as usual, to countenance the display: it is only fair to add, however, that the attendant exhibitions on the stage, inseparable from a *pirouette* or a *pas de seul*, could be understood by any body; and you might still see a matron or a miss, a dowager or little lady Fanny, a noble minor or his toothless papa, evincing by intelligent eyes, of which some looked envious or emulative, some sparkled, and some could only gloat, their very general apprehension of the beauty of the ballet.

Charity retained her public exhibitions and performances. Handbills, newspapers, and tracts and pamphlets, continued to challenge for the patrons, presidents, vice-presidents, com-

mittees and subscribers of schools, asylums, repositories, and Bible societies, the notice and admiration of the world; and good dramatic scenes were got up between ladies and gentlemen at meetings, visitings, and dinners. Patronage, too, acted her farces, and they proved as amusing as ever to all the actors, except one; "the wretch who was left to weep." Fashionable performers, in pulpits, attracted fine houses, for two or three months at a time, and were then voted *out of character;* sectarianism spouted its delicious cant, mostly in a style of acting, that in my day, Dowton knew how to assume, perhaps too well; here, however, there was often a wrong cast among the *corps dramatique;* a village weaver, indeed, "idle for weft," might *ill loom* or *warp* the *thread* of a text, whether *worsted* or not; his perfection, meantime, being to *cotton* close, and make a *soft* impression, and a smooth *shew* in the eyes of *the fair;* still, some unfitness between the performers and the characters occurred, the slim Oxford-grey suit, and the sleeked hair, not always disguising the want of natural calling in the actor; and, alas, the legitimate lawn itself, was once similarly deficient, when, as Butler says,

"The oyster-women locked their fish up,
And trudged away to cry 'No bishop!'"

A performance, which in my world of 1823, I had left in a rapid state of improvement behind me, was now at the top of its well-merited popularity. I mean the "*noble* science." Long ago the polite French translated the title of its professors and disciples into "The Gentlemen of the Imagination;" and this or any other term most expressive of delicacy and respect, I am anxious to adopt in speaking of the rank and character of the *milling* exhibitors of 2023. Having been pressed by an acquaintance to go a little way into the country to witness a prize-battle, from which considerable sport was expected, I went, accordingly; and let my sensations be guessed at, when I beheld a member of parliament and a lord, *peel* for the *set-to*. Millions were staked at both sides. The scaffolding around was crowded, promiscuously, with peers and pick-pockets, blackguards and baronets, generals and cut-throats, black-legs and black-gowns: a secretary and a professional bruizer were bottle-holders; and the *judges* were from the fives-court, or the law-courts, indifferently. The

member *tapped claret* first, and for several rounds *stood-up* to his man, and many good *grassers* were given, to the mutual honor of the commons and the aristocracy of Old England, of whom, indeed, the mutual interests and feelings seemed almost politically engaged; but after a fight of seventy-six minutes and a quarter, the lord proved the *better man;* and then, mighty was the aristocratic shout, and deafening the plebeian clamour! For my own part, I cheered the successful and distinguished champion, whose appearance, as he was borne to his coach, with *bibs* on both his eyes, his nose gushing blood, and his lips puffed out like a cauliflower, gave me a comfortable idea of, as a favourite fancy-writer terms it, "the corner-stones of the British nation—humanity of heart—generosity of disposition—firmness of mind—and courage of soul."

Afterwards, and, indeed previously, I grew quite familiar to the sight of an accidental *turn-up* between draymen and gentlemen, coal-porters and nobles, in the public streets; it was no unusual thing, if a hackney-coach-driver impeded or crossed a coroneted carriage, to see the valiant proprietors of both descend to the *pavé,*

one from his box, the other from his luxurious lounge inside, and there adjust the dispute. I should notice, too, that the fashionable prevalence of the *science* had, for many years, exploded the mere child's-play of feather-springed triggers. All personal quarrels were decided at the *scratch*, with, however, the proper laws of honor regulating a difference between the *light weights* and the *heavy weights*. I was delighted with the whole arrangement; it was the very climax which all well-wishers of the national character must have expected the fancy to attain, and, indeed, the very one towards which, previous to my revelations, I had left it rapidly progressing. My only wonder was, that it took so long a time to arrive at its point: so, I lent my hearty voice to the triumph of British *science*, and with millions at my side, shouted out, Huzza for the gentle lords of the ring! English nobility and English *milling* for ever!

But I was most surprised to find undisturbed by time, the *performance* of funerals. As I walked through town, I read at one or two houses in every street, just as it had been in old London, "*Funerals performed;*" and the rage of the people ran as high for this kind of

recreation, as I remembered ever to have seen it; so much so, that I often met from five to ten representations of the ceremony in the course of a single day. I suppose the taste belongs to that wayward class, we have been taught to regard as connected with a state of exquisite refinement; the lawyers, though, need not have endeavoured, as they lately did, to convict poor Lord Portsmouth of lunacy, for his dispositions in this way; for, assuredly, the thing is too common to warrant any particular wonder or notice. Either now, or in the time to come, one may have a funeral performed to any extent, and with any degree of effect. When the performers are sufficiently well paid, they array a hearse and mourning-coaches, all drawn by heavy, fat, black horses, with black feathers in their heads, and black housings, harness, and reins. In the hearse is laid a coffin, and about it, actresses sit in mourning cloaks, with white handkerchiefs to their faces; but these, indeed, they seldom raise past their mouths, having little reason; and they are really used rather to mask laughter than to receive tears. Some of the actors occupy the front seat of the hearse, along with the coachman; others fill the coaches;

all, in course, clad in deep mourning; even the driver has his black streamers, black gloves, and black whip, and so the procession moves on.

When a fancier of this show chooses to gratify himself at moderate expense, he only hires the actors and actresses, without the hearse and coaches; the men to bear a mock-coffin and pall, and the women to follow with their black hoods and white handkerchiefs; occasionally, to give some semblance of nature, children, whom we are to suppose the orphans of the deceased, mingle in the train.

But apart from my objections to such an amusement in any shape, I must say it is the least deceptive piece of acting I have yet witnessed in the present or future London. Regular theatrical people keep their faces in any situation of grief or solemnity; but the persons I speak of, laugh and titter at every step. Then the men are almost all badly chosen for their parts; stout jolly fellows, they, their faces quite an insult on any gentlemanly state of health, and, who, as they pass by in their open coaches, or on foot, seem rather on their way to a wedding or a christening, than to a burial. I think, consistency itself might suggest companies of lean,

bilious-looking men: or, as it is at the theatres, pale tints or washes might be used to give the outside appearance of sorrow at least.

We have heard a good deal objected to the Irish hubbabbo or creenthe chaun—and the flippant old women hired to raise it; but they are good actors; and no matter whether they be sincere or not, keep up the decency of appearance. I can recollect but two instances in which I thought the levity of our funeral-performers in season; one, when I was told they enacted a funeral, supposed to be got up by a young heir, on the death of a tough, though rich old uncle; another, when we were to imagine that a gay widow caused to be conveyed to his last home, a venerable and duly honored partner.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"If the mother that him bare
Had look'd upon his features there,
She had not known her child."

SCOTT.

"Solomon saith, 'there is no new thing upon the earth;'—so that Plato had an imagination that all knowledge was but remembrance; so Solomon giveth his sentence, 'that all novelty is oblivion.'"

BACON.—ESSAY ON VICISSITUDES OF THINGS.

I DO not know how to account for the mistakes made in futurity, as to the personal appearance of some of the public characters of the present day: but the people had got it into their heads that (for example) the Lord Chancellor Eldon, Mr. Hazlitt, and the Rev. Mr. Crawly, (this was the way they spelt the poet's name) were handsome men, and Mr. Lambton a fresh-coloured man; that Mr. Brougham had a classic nose; that Mr. Scarlett was thin, and Mr. Denman stout; Mr. Wilberforce of imposing stature, and inclined to dress gay; the Duke of Buckingham

so small as, at thirteen paces, to prove, to the Duke of Bedford, invisible; Mr. Moore, a tall, broad-shouldered Irishman, the ideal of his wife-hunting nation, and indebted for his unparalleled success with the ladies, as much to his proportions as to his poetry; Cobbett, a dandy; Leigh Hunt, a sloven; Hogg, a study for a young Arcadian Shepherd; and Sir Aubrey De Vere Hunt,* the first Munster poet since the days of Cormac Mac Culligan, archbishop, and author of the Psalter of Cashel, a pale, slender person, after the model of Kirk White. Then they thought Coleridge looked like a clergyman; the commander-in-chief like a captain; the Duke of Wellington like a genius; Alexander like an emperor; Louis like a king; Chateaubriand like a statesman, and Talleyrand like a tragic poet; that Sir T. Stephney looked like a sensible old gentleman; and that the speaker of 1823, Mr. Murray, and the Rev. Mr. Irving, never *looked about them;* that Madame De Stael was a beauty, and Lady Morgan and Mrs. Siddons of a height.

And this leads me to mention other mistakes committed, with regard to the political opinions

* Author of an undeservedly-neglected dramatic poem, "*Julien the Apostate.*"

and characters of our public men: they thought Lord Holland a tory, for instance, and Mr. Peel a whig; the hero of Waterloo a catholic advocate, and very proud of his country; and Mr. Hume a stickler for tithes, and the seconder of all motions for annual parliamentary grants; Sir F. Burdett an obstreperous government man, and Irish Mr. Plunkett a Manchester radical and a bottle-pelter; John Hunt a cabinet hack, and Theodore Hook a disaffected person; Creevy a ministerial writer and speaker, and Croker a popular writer and speaker; Hobhouse a silent voter against all questions for the good of the country, and Mr. Huskisson a mob orator; Ricardo and Baring upholders of places, pensions, and sinecures, and in every way disposed to squander the public money; and Lord Castlereagh and Lord Sidmouth retrenchers and political economists; Mr. Grey Bennett and Mr. T. Ellis very eloquent; and Mr. Martin, of Galway, so notorious for cruelty to animals, that it got him twice sent to the tread-mill.

I have before made it appear, in a conversation with Mr. Drudge, that the people of 2023 knew nothing of the force of the terms, whig

and tory; and perhaps the confusion I here point out may be attributed to that ignorance or indifference: for, will mankind trouble itself to recollect the political opinions of one with whose ephemeral politics it has ceased to feel any interest? Or will the ardour and pertinacity in which, during a sympathetic reign of admiration and hate, one may have successfully put forward those opinions, recommend them a jot to the provoking phlegm of a posterity, enough engaged in their own little bustle and wrangling, or else sunk into apathy?

But this mode of reasoning scarcely accounts for some curious pieces of historical anecdote the good people of futurity wished me to receive as authentic. They related, indeed, such matters as the following:—That Dr. O'Connor, of Stowe, was wholly ignorant of Irish literature, and his friend Mr. Sheffield Grace (whose cabinet volume is praised by Captain Rock) unacquainted with his own noble and chivalrous pedigree; that after the year 1829, Southey published another book, so far differing from his Book of the Church, that he was fined and imprisoned for it; that Carlisle caught his death while holding forth in Spitalfields, as a Wesleyan preacher,

and died a penitent; that Judge Best, having retired from the bench to give himself leisure, wrote a pamphlet in vindication of Tom Paine; that Ferdinand the Seventh died a protestant, and Lord Byron a devotee of the Greek church, after he had finished Don Juan, by making him an Irish bishop; that Alderman Wood succeeded Sir B. Bloomfield in royal favour; and that Hone became printer to the Bible society, and Little Waddy a distributer, under him, on the Irish mission. They also committed an anachronism as to the era of Junius, supposing the book to have been written about the present time, and making out a strong case to father it on Mr. Macready, the actor.

A few questions concerning which, in the day I now write, we seem divided, they further undertook to adjust in their own way. Of the mermaid, there was but one opinion: that she was half of a very ugly woman, stitched to the half of a large cod; and then they said, that Clara Fisher lived to the year 1850, and never grew an inch taller, nor, indeed, changed much in her general appearance; and they ruled, that the Chapeau de Paille was *not* Rubens's master-piece, although Mr. Smith, of Great Marl-

borough Street, gave about three thousand English guineas for it, the picture being head-size; and although the populace stood with uncovered heads in the streets of Antwerp while it was put up to auction, and then would have risen and murdered the English brokers, only for some precautions on the part of the police. Least of all was the portrait considered that of a handsome woman, notwithstanding the story of its having been painted by Rubens from the lady of his love; in England, at least, large glaring eyes and a vulgar expression of face could not pass for beauty.

But as if the human mind were so framed as that it never can get on equally in all its movements; as if, like a wooden Dutch clock, it must ever be out of repair in one part or another, so that when you mend it *here*, it wants a pin, or clacks on at random *there*, and so continues from year's end to year's end, each year of its crazy existence, never improved though a thousand times altered, because in proportion as it goes better in one or two points, it goes worse in a third or fourth——

——But I am hampered by a long parenthesis, and cannot, myself, get on till I run away from

it, which I hereby do; and now I shall try to explain what I mean in more "lucid order."

No set of opinions is, or ever was, or ever will be perfect under the sun: no frame of the human mind, no arrangement of its machinery. Right or perfection in one thing almost implies error or deficiency in another. While the Egyptians were the best,—perhaps the only—and I say perhaps in deference to *all* theories of cosmogony and chronology—perhaps the only architects and astronomers of the earth, they bowed down to Baal, and knew nothing of an epic poem; while Greece had her Hesiod and Homer, and travelled to the very top of excellence in painting and sculpture, she thought the surface of the world like a platter or a pancake, and that a god could make a bull in love, and still retain his divinity; while Rome turned the earth into one great review-field, and had her poets, her patriots, and her statesmen, such as were never excelled, she did not produce a single picture or statue; while the French were, avowedly, the best dancers and fiddlers extant,* they, at one time, erected scaffolding to allow the ladies of the court to enjoy the martyrdom

* Time of Henry II.

of Castelnau; at other and much later periods they occupied a week in putting a man to death, as in the cases of Damien and Ravaillac: breaking his bones and joints, one by one, opening his flesh to pour molten lead into it, and at last tying him to four wild horses; and down to the present day they believe in all the tragic unities. China mistakes obstinate and stupid consistency for irrevocable perfection, and has done so for I do not know how many thousand years; or if I do, there is prudence in declining to give offence either at Canterbury or Pekin: so that she must, necessarily, be always wrong; necessarily, because comparatively. As to our magnificent selves;—in the dazzling age of Elizabeth, the people lived in wooden houses; London was a scattered group of sheds—a bivouac; the greatest queen in the world rode on a *pillion*, behind her lord chancellor, to open her parliament; and insisted that titled ladies of her train should, on their knees, rub her plate with salt every day before dinner. Then, for politeness, imagine the maiden sovereign boxing the ears of a young officer, and—allow us the probability—swearing like a trooper. Some years, and England had a protestant

king; who believed he was waylaid by witchcraft; a British parliament enacted laws against witches; and one of her most learned men, Selden, vindicated those laws, which were not repealed till the year 1822. Only a few years before their repeal a good portion of the people, with educated and distinguished men at their head, took, from a vulgar old woman with a dropsy, accepted bills on heaven; although in a few years again, the same people raised a prodigious laugh at some of their provincial neighbours for generously attributing to the miraculous, the at least unaccountable abracadabra of Prince Hohenlohe: and, although at the very exact time, all the lower order, and a majority of the middle classes in England, believed in fortune-telling and charms.

And this leads me straight to my point. In the year 2023 I met Joanna the Second, in the shape of an old lady who had travelled hither from Wales on a huge goat, conducted by a Welsh parson. Two cabinet ministers were her immediate disciples, and from ladies of the first rank she received christening clothes of amazing value. The day before I lost sight of futurity, however, the whole of these precious

bales were traced to the shops of various pawnbrokers about the west end, and the beldam humbug eloped with a fencing master.

An old man once lamented to an old king that, by new laws, the ancient order of things was quite subverted; when the king said, "If that be the case, things only proceed in their regular and proper order; for I remember to have heard my father say, that there was in his time a total subversion of things; so that if they are inverted again, they are restored to heir pristine state."

Perhaps I should have acknowledged the force of this reasoning, when I met, among a future people such re-adoptions of our old credulities as I have just instanced. Certainly I was by no means offended to find, in the re-enaction of a bill against witchcraft, another proof of the theory. Nor in the restoration to popular credit and sympathy of Lord Lyttleton and Peter Miles Andrew, another. Before this I had been but ill satisfied with the grave affectation that would dispel the fine world of supernaturals in which we all love to revel. I scarcely envied the perfection of intellect that could deprive me of such an indulgence. I am

content with my imperfect eye and nose, which, though they cannot impart the concavity or essential odour of a pore, still beguile me into a belief that the cheek of a Venus is a beautiful surface, and her sigh an aromatic perfume. On the same principle, while my reason is and ever must be unable absolutely to demonstrate the non-existence of ghosts and devils, I am satisfied with the probability of the matter, and the right good gossip it inculcates. Sam. Johnson for ever! I say; he was the man after my own heart, when he declined to replace with phosphorus and magic lanterns, his beau-ideal of spiritual agency. Scores of old women were roasted or strangled during my stay in London to come.

CHAPTER XXV.

" Fa-ra diddle di,
And a fa-ra diddle d,
And a high-dum,—dye-dum
Fiddle—dum c." STERNE.

But of the political history of England, after the year 1823, or thereabouts, I am almost afraid to speak; being perhaps too sensitive of the slightest question of my veracity, and at the same time aware what things it is my duty to relate. Under the guidance of my good friend, Mr. Drudge, I sat down, in the British Museum, to a history, in two small volumes, of all that had happened to the country from 1823 to 2023: each volume embracing a century of time. And first let me express the wonder I felt at finding the voluminous biography and important anecdote I had left behind me, squeezed into so niggard a compass; what a huge heap of fat, thought I, melted down to a scrap of lean!

I shall glance but at a few of the events, of which I have taken the heads in my note-book.

From 1823 to 1832 things remained pretty quiet: but in the middle of the year 1832 Alexander and Monsieur, the then King of France, quarrelled about Spain. While they were wrangling, Spain once more kicked up her heels on her own account, and Canning at last suffering his fine sense of right to overcome his prudence, set us to assist the agonized efforts for independence of that wretched country.

The south of Europe was, naturally, the arena of combat; but when, with successful results, we had drained ourselves of troops at home, the czar stole a march on us, and landed, out of his standing army of a million, one hundred and seventy thousand Calmucks and Cossacks, at various points of the kingdom. Of these, about one half marched into London, captured and demolished the Tower—I have before alluded to its disappearance—bivouacked in St. James's Park, Hyde Park, and Kensington Gardens; and broke into the Soho and Burlington bazaars, destroyed the character of all the young women, and put on all the millinery, feathers, and other finery.

What was now to be done, and what *was*

done, is the question. This was the time for Napoleon, you will say;—but he was dead and gone. Was he? Stuff.—The old fellows of the old guards, who, upon the report of his demise, swore they would not believe a word of it, were, after all, the only keen politicians in Europe; for, exactly as they said, the man was still alive and doing well, only that our ministers made out a good story of his death, just to see how the mice would play when the cat was thought to be gone; and in the juncture of affairs I have described, the old scourge of kings once more re-appeared at the head of a considerable body of English, Irish, and Scotch militia, hastily, but ardently and determinedly formed, and encountering the northern hordes in two pitched battles, once at St. Alban's, and the second time on Hounslow, completely defeated and routed them, and England was again free. Afterwards, indeed almost immediately, he proceeded to the relief of the Duke of Wellington; who for some weeks had been experiencing a reverse of fortune among his old Pyrennees; and having, with much difficulty effected a junction of forces, the two generals rapidly accomplished, in the first place, the independence of Spain, causing France to recognize

it; and then they marched over Russia, whipped Alexander into Petersburg; made him reduce his cravat and standing army, and give every assurance and pledge of future good conduct. I was anxious to know what finally became of Napoleon; and with some further reading ascertained that, declining more considerable rewards which were proposed to him, he accepted a small estate, a farm indeed, in Yorkshire, and lived to a good old age upon it. The complaint in his stomach, and all other symptoms of ill-health disappeared, and for years he might be seen walking about his grounds, overlooking his workmen, a stout, fresh-faced old gentleman, wearing a grey frock and his own white hair; sometimes he rode up to town on the outside of a stage, to a meeting of an agricultural society, and dined with Mr. Barry O'Meara and Mr. J. W. Croker.

Now as to a few of the more domestic events of those times.

In the reign of a monarch whose name has escaped my memory, (and the pencil note has blurred) modified reform took place in parliament, principally because Cobbett, then a very old man, came up with a petition for perpetual

parliaments, and extension of the sinecure list, together with an increase of taxes, and boroughs, and paper currency. This petition, with its signatures, occupied the skins of two hundred and three sheep; it reached from the House of Commons to Charing Cross, and was drawn to the doors of the house by a team of oxen, one of whom fell under the load.

About the year 1829, there was a grand rebellion in Ireland. At some prospect of relief and indulgence to the Irish papists, the Irish Orangemen revolted; seized the castle, and imprisoned the lord lieutenant; burnt the popish chapels, and played the devil in all the Irish nunneries; and for a short time did what they liked, in fact. The male papists did not interfere, affecting to think it beneath them; but left the adjustment of the matter to the *poissardes* of Pill Lane,—(the Dublin Billingsgate)—and to the old women of the Poddle, in the liberties, who, headed by Mr. Plunkett and Counsellor Shiel, the only persons of the masculine gender that appeared on the loyal side, soon routed and extinguished the Orangemen, liberated the viceroy, and restored to England her emerald sister. Thus the rebellion came to be put down in the capital. Through the

country it was suppressed by Captain Rock, who, for the first time, gave quarter to his enemies, satisfying himself with slitting the noses and cutting off the ears of all the Orangemen, that, after a battle, fell into his hands. For these services Mr. Plunkett was listened to when next he made a speech in parliament, Mr. Shiel got appointed one of the commissioners of Irish bankruptcy, and Captain Rock was made a gauger.

Perhaps, too, it was rather as a tribute of gratitude to the Catholic women of Ireland that, some short time after, their fathers, brothers, sons, &c. were emancipated. The measure certainly took place, whatever might have been the motive; nor were the immediate consequences so fatal as well-wishers to the government had expected; though, indeed, a few old ladies, who had money in the funds, expired in terror, or by their own hands, the night after the debate which determined the question. Many Irish Orangemen, who had been distinguished foes to papistry before this political change happened, ratted round, and died in the arms of the Catholic church. Lord Monck, too, drank the Pope's health, at an annual dinner of the Beef-Steak Club, in Dublin; Sir A. B.

King charged his own prices on quills and paper, supplied by him, when a convert, to the Catholic Board; and the Rev. Sir Harcourt Lees, wearing a national green ribbon in his button-hole, was for seven years before his death a bigotted parish-priest in the wilds of Connaught.

As to the advantages to Irish Catholics themselves, they were immense and immediate. Counsellor O'Connell became Chief Justice of the Hibernian King's Bench, and one of his sons Commander of the forces in Ireland, and another a senior fellow of T. C. D. Prince Hohenlohe's Irish agent, Dr. Doyle, sat in the House of Lords, by the side of his liberal friend, Dr. Magee; Tommy Moore succeeded Southey in the laureateship; all the Catholic Irish newspapers got the Castle proclamations; and my friend, Michael Staunton, who was so much scolded by Cobbett, for re-publishing his Register, is said to have made three thousand a-year by his part of the job. Watty Cox came in for the editing of Blackwood's Magazine; and a Dublin physician of the name of Brenan, got, on the strength of turpentine and Catholicism, a snug annuity for attending the *accouchements* of Irish Lady Lieutenants.

CHAPTER XXVI.

' Had not God, for some strong purpose, steeled
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted,
And barbarism itself have pitied *'her.'*"

Rich. II.

Some points of rather remote history which, in the present day, we either seem unwilling to be decisive with, or are really undecided upon, the people of 2023 at length determined. I shall allude but to one or two of this kind.

Mary of Scotland came pure from the ordeal of time, the charges that for hundreds of years had made her beauty hideous, now forgotten or despised; and the world at last enjoyed an unimpeded view of one of the most lovely, accomplished, fascinating, neglected, and miserable creatures that ever adorned it. Doubtless, in my own first era Mr. Whitaker and others had disturbed the rotting heap of slander, under which the poor Mary lay, even in memory, entombed; and after him, Mr. Chalmers had, to

the gratification of all good and wise men, entirely cleared it away; yet, perhaps, it was natural that ages should yet roll on, ere the mouth of universal opinion re-echoed the cheering proof of such able and benevolent writers.

I thought it a real happiness, a kind of jubilee of the heart, to see this fair and wretched woman, this queen of smiles and courts, who never reigned in either; who, as if by the recoil of all human envy, seemed an outcast from all human sympathy,—who was born a princess, only to be ten times a slave—who had a soul for virtuous pleasure, only that she might more acutely taste of the bitters of suffering—who was beautiful only unto perdition—a surpassing victim, gorgeously tricked out for the doomed sacrifice! The portion of better nature within me triumphed, when, at last, I saw even her shade—her echoed name—stand forth, pitied and vindicated, and when I knew that the knees of the hearts of men bent down to do her a manly and gallant worship!

If Mary, if such a woman was thought and called innocent, what was thought of, and how were termed, her persecutors? What word was applied to the authors of her death? There

could be but one thought, of and for them, and their deed. It was called murder, and they were called—assassins.

Prepare ye! wicked and cruel ministers!—Burleigh, the cold and cunning—Leicester, the profligate and heartless—Walsingham and Killigrew, the tame and obedient—and Davison, the base, the mean, and the duped—prepare for the fiat that shall soon be, if it has not already been made against you! Stand at the bar of time and of your country,—at the bar of your God you have already stood for it—and hear the sentence both shall pronounce!—Tremble in your stony "cerements," or in the depths of eternity; let your ashes stir, and your spirits shudder, as the certain though late verdict is recorded!

And she, too, your mover and principal, of whom, though one poet has sung, that "her lion-port, and awe commanding face" were

"Attempered sweet to virgin grace—"

Another, and a more unaffected one, sings:—

"The weeping blood in woman's heart
Was never known to thee,
Nor the balm that droops on wounds of woe,
Frae woman's pitying e'e!"

She, the lioness of England, the burden of

eulogy, the virgin queen! by your side shall she stand, for the same deed to be arraigned, and by the same voice judged.

If *we* have not already decided on the nature of Elizabeth's feelings towards Mary, I did not find posterity so backward in using, for decision, only the means we possess. They saw but one interpretation to be given to Elizabeth's hypocritical and blasphemous messages to her packed parliament; to her approval of the secret association against Mary's life; to her well known hints for secretly despatching her poor rival; to the letter to Paulet and Drury, got up at her instance, by Walsingham and Davison, absolutely commanding a private assassination; to her savage displeasure, when those good men returned an answer, refusing "to shed blood without law or warrant;" and, when, according to the confessions of Davison, Elizabeth "severely complained of the *daintiness* and blamed the *niceness* of those precise fellows, as she termed them, who professed great zeal for her safety, but would *perform* nothing; adding, that she could have done very well without them, *and named one Wingfield, who with some others, would have undertaken* IT."*

* Life of Davison, by Nicolas.

Nor was Elizabeth's canting plea of expediency, on account of the imaginary danger to herself, allowed to disguise the obvious manifestation of mere personal hatred, which at every step in this black business, she scarcely attempted to restrain.

The following anecdote proved that she could have entertained no political fear of Mary, inasmuch as she rejected every offer of feasible arrangement, by which such fear, if it had had existence, might have been removed.

After Paulet and Drury refused to assassinate the Queen of Scots, and that the official warrant had, with a heartless mockery of deliberation, been made out, some additional pause ensued, during which the kings of France and Scotland sent ambassadors to Elizabeth, soliciting mercy for the wretched Mary. Hume has doubted the sincerity of Henry IV.; but James's appeal, for a parent, pedant as he was, and crocodile, as his after treatment of Somerset* proves him to have been, cannot be questioned.

* "On my soul, I shall never eat nor sleep, till I see thee again," said James to his fallen favourite, when arrested, and about to be sent to the Tower, in his presence; then, hugging him, he accompanied Somerset to the coach, and as it drove off, turned on his heel, and added, "De'il go wi' thee."

His ambassadors proposed that he should give his chief nobility as hostages to secure Elizabeth from any attempts of his mother, who should abdicate in James's favour; and this was further to be guaranteed by foreign princes. "And I spake," writes the Master of Gray, one of the ambassadors, to James, giving an account of his embassy: "I spake, craving of her that her life may be spared for fifteen days: she refused; Sir Robert craved for only eight days; she said, 'NOT FOR AN HOUR,' and so gied her way."

The poetical picture drawn by Hume—(albeit not fond of poetical pictures) of Elizabeth, when she first received intelligence of the murder, and which represents her as shocked, deprived of speech, and overwhelmed with sorrow, posterity rejected; filling up its place with the truer portrait by Davison, an eye-witness, who says, that when *she first heard it*, Elizabeth "shewed no alteration at all;" nor was it till the *following morning* that she bethought of a necessity for *shewing* any.

"The following morning" she raved, indeed, and sent Davison to the Tower on a charge of having forwarded the warrant to Fotheringay

without her commands. Without her especial instructions, as to time, he certainly forwarded it, but as certainly, in depraved obedience to her general suggestions. And this was, all along, Elizabeth's policy; to get the deed done, and yet save one poor loop-hole through which she might escape the downright evidence of having immediately authorised it. Davison exactly did what Elizabeth wished him to do; but, as exactly, what she well contrived not to give him positive orders for. And there cannot be a doubt that, in addition to her grand duplicity in this affair, she hired Davison *pro tempore*, for, first, the execution of her purpose, and next, as her propitiatory victim to common opinion. I shall express it clearer, by using an emphatic, though homely phrase; Davison was her cat's-paw: and Camden, for once at least, is to be respected, when, in other words, he says the same thing.

Some one was to have been sacrificed to the deep calculations of Elizabeth; James and Henry were to have been humoured; particularly James, whose appeal, before noticed, contained a kind of cowardly threat; but the previous members of her cabinet Elizabeth could not

spare; Burleigh's profound craft was invaluable; Killigrew and Walsingham were also of rank and importance; and no one could expect Leicester at the hands of the Virgin Queen. In Davison, however, we see a man every way fitted to the occasion. An adventurer, without ancestry, without family, and his very country a problem; and further possessing that precise portion of small talent, that made him at once a good tool, and an easy prey to more commanding powers and more daring profligacy. He was just sufficiently clever to know himself so, and to fall a victim to his own credulity. And, accordingly, let us observe the coincidence of his appointment. He first became secretary a few days before the naming of the commission to try Mary. Walsingham seasonably got ill; and during the whole progress of the business, Davison was, alone and singly, Elizabeth's confidential counsellor. Again, let us note the time of his going out of office. It was the day after Mary was privately beheaded under the roof of Fotheringay Castle. He then got a lodging in the Tower; and of all his accomplices, none but him. These facts require no comment.

An attempt has lately been made by a writer

already mentioned in a note, to prove Davison an honest man, particularly with regard to his agency in this assassination. It seems unavoidable that a biographer must never rest satisfied with writing any thing less than the apotheosis of his subject; that like godfathers and godmothers, he must stoutly stand up to promise infallibility for the posthumous life of any public character he may select as his theme; else surely it would have been enough to demonstrate that, in despatching the warrant, Davison acted under the general instructions of Elizabeth, and consequently, that her persecution of him for doing so, was flagrant injustice.

But this can never rescue him from the odium of having sent it at all; of having been so nearly and fearfully connected with the murder of Mary of Scotland; because extenuation of this agency depends on extenuation of the act of murder itself; which posterity thought impossible. He occasionally objected to the use of the dagger or the bowl with Mary; yes, he knew the laws of England, of which one adjudges life for life, and another says, the sovereign can do no wrong. But after all, it is very remarkable that the only active and actual step taken

towards the secret disposal of the unfortunate prisoner, was taken by Davison. Walsingham, indeed, prepared and signed the letter with him; *but Davison called to have it done;* and he sent it; I mean, necessarily, the infamous letter to Paulet and Drury. Here, then, is one act——do we need two of the same kind?—to stamp him with but one character. If the letter had succeeded; if the cup were mixed and given, or the knife whetted and used, what epithet would incontestably fit him in the eyes of posterity? And how could the glorious failure, over which he had no control, chasten the breast of Davison?

Look at the man, when he has been sent to the Tower, and he appears in his true light. We now see a creature, mean enough for any crime; without moral courage, without self-assertion, without that indignant bearing which a true sense of integrity, and a true dislike of the measures proposed to, and practised upon himself, would certainly have prompted. By his own statements he knew that Elizabeth contemplated the poorest kind of assassination; she suggested it to him. He also knew he was her victim; that from first to last he had been

her dupe. Yet with this experience and consciousness, in his whining answers to Elizabeth's monstrous interrogatories; in his cringing appeals to her, during and after his mock trial, and for the whole time of his imprisonment, Davison's only aim is to regain one step on the thriving ground he has lost. He flatters, fawns, and prostrates himself. He grows lachrymose about "his poor estate"; to whom? to the woman, whom he knew for a hypocrite, a "common stabber," and in his own person, a cool slanderer, and refined tyrant.

And is this the man who, biographical necessities apart, posterity was to have classed with the "noblest works of God," and held up as a model to remote generations? No. They regarded him as a dupe, but they were glad of it. They knew he was falsely punished for the attributed crime, but they thought him not sufficiently punished for the real one. They considered his case something like Ney's, who was murdered on a charge of treason to the king-author, but who deserved death for treachery to his true sovereign.

I cannot avoid subjoining the only document

on record, that goes to snatch from total infamy the character of England, as shewn in the diplomacy of that age, and in connexion with the cruel murder of an innocent, helpless, beautiful, talented, and royal woman!

"To Sir FRANCIS WALSINGHAM, Knt.

"Sir,

"Your letter of yesterday coming to my hands this present day, at five in the afternoon, I would not fail, according to your directions, to return my answer with all possible speed, which shall deliver unto you great grief and bitterness of mind, in that I am so unhappy as to have liven to see this unhappy day, in the which, I am desired, *by direction from my most gracious sovereign*, to do an act *which God and the law forbiddeth.* My good livings and life are at her majesty's disposition, and am ready to lose them this next morrow, yf it shall so please her; acknowledging that I hold them as of her mere and most gracious favour. I do not desire them, to enjoy them, but with her highness' good liking; *but God forbid that I should make so foul a shipwrack of my con-*

science, or leave so great a blot to my posterity, OR SHED BLOOD WITHOUT LAW AND WARRANT—

Your most assured poor friends,

" A. PAULET.

" D. DRURY.

" *From Fotheringay,*
" *the 2nd of February,* 1586."

These were the men, who, when they sent her this letter, Elizabeth called "precise fellows!" And such a woman we have been in the habit of admiring, and of these men we scarcely know the names! Alas, alas! and is it thus, that, for hundreds of years, a little sway, a little cunning, a little brilliancy, can succeed in hiding its own innate and sterling viciousness, and, at the same time, the as sterling worth of others? And does our nature doom us to be ever more ready to assent to the bold assumptions of vice, than to seek for the proofs of humble virtue?

Honored, at last, though late, be the names of Paulet and Drury! Immortal be their memories! They who "were honest in the worst of times," refusing, at the hazard of place and life, to become hired assassins to a jealous woman, and a most flagitious gang of ministers!

Mary was under their roof, and they could not do it! They saw her lovely, wretched, abandoned, meek; they listened to her voice, and looked into her face, and beheld her moving in uncrowned majesty among them, and they could not!

Wretched woman! and, how fascinating, how heart-touching in her wretchedness!

I had in boyhood a dream of Fotheringay Castle, of which the effects have never left my mind, and, I think, never can leave it. It is always impossible to communicate to others even a faint notion of what one suffers either of joy or sorrow, from a powerful dream; and mine will particularly come under this impossibility. But I was in a large hall, hung with black, and only dimly lit with the daylight of a gone-by age. Through the silence and vagueness that time had set between me and all I saw, there appeared a black scaffolding, a hideous face and person, with an axe, and behind, I know not how, a group of frowning or indifferent faces, shaped out of the general recollections I had snatched from portraits and prints, of the features of Elizabeth's ministers. In the midst she stood, herself; not frowning, but with the disgusting leer that Da-

vison reports her to have worn, when, as if in sport, she caught up and signed the fatal instrument. All at once, a fine form, clothed in mourning, stood by the block. The frightful headsman advanced—she at first shrunk a step from him—then she was kneeling—the axe dimly glimmered in motion over her—it descended, and I felt it on my own neck! A moment, and I awoke in horrible agony; but by the strange transitions of dreams, ere I was perfectly awake, I had one glance more at the scaffold; what I had before seen in perfect shape, was now mutilated! I had looked, and it was beauty clothed in light; I looked again, and it was beauty rolled in blood!—

CHAPTER XXVII.

" As I do live by food I met a fool,
Who laid him down——
And railed on lady-fortune, in good terms,
In good set terms, and yet a motley fool."

Touchstone.

THERE was a continuation of " the Eccentrics" among the wits of 2023; and of the Alfred and others. Many new clubs also flourished, of which the names and objects seemed rather incomprehensible to me; nor do I think that if I submitted the clearest statements of them, they should prove intelligible to our present conventional notions of fun, humour, and utility.

I shall describe but one, which, as it was originally formed a few years after the era of 1823, may have a better chance of being understood. And, first, as to the name; it was called " The Ill-used Club." Eligibility to its sittings and honors, arose from a candidate being able to state some glaring instance of mal-treatment, re-

ceived at the hands of mankind in general, or even of an individual. His statement came before the club in the shape of a petition, moved and seconded by two members of well-known claims to character as ill-used gentlemen; it was then tried according to fundamental laws, that defined the various kinds of grievance cognizable by the institution; and if found to shew any allowed evidence of bad usage, the petitioner was commiserated and admitted.

The business of an evening generally divided itself as follows. Petitions from candidates were first considered. As those were numerous, the discussion of them, and the orders for admission or rejection growing out of them, occupied two hours most commonly. An hour was then devoted to conversations on the coldness or blindness of the world, with expatiations from each member as to his own peculiar claims to be considered the most ill-treated man in the room. Another hour elapsed in almost unbroken silence; the members chewing opium or tobacco, smoking, or drinking coffee. I should mention the ceremony observed on the admission of a new brother. The members rose, stood pensively behind their chairs, and with drooping heads, and one hand thrust into their bosoms,

greeted him with an audible sigh; he standing at the door and observing a like deportment. They then mournfully embraced him, and all assumed their seats in silence.

The chief obligation occasionally entered into by the members, was, that they should indulge, during life, a settled apathy and hatred towards all such exertion as had once proved futile, or productive only of disappointment. Repeated and misapplied effort was thus saved; reiterated vexations avoided, with all the feverish pangs and throbbings of defeated ambition and galled pride. Convinced at once, and in good time, of the inefficacy of individual worth to struggle against the slander, and unprincipled competition of the world, the happy members spent the remainder of their days in a state of mixed nausea, listlessness, and resignation. Such a tone of spirit, naturally disposed them to moralize on the short-sightedness or partiality of the multitude towards men of inferior talents, but extraordinary success; and in this quiet tone of observation I have heard the chief heroes of the day, of every pursuit and class, stripped of their holiday fascinations, and brought down to merited insignificance.

Place or precedence in the club was not re-

gulated by the length of time during which a member might have been admitted; heavy maltreatment, either in kind or degree, constituting alone the pretension to superiority. If a gentleman could shew that he had been ill-used oftener than another, or if he could even state one case more grievous than three, four, or six, relied upon by his neighbour, he took his place accordingly. As there was a very general solicitude for so peculiar a distinction, and as each urged his own case with confident reliance on its unparalleled magnitude, much interesting diversity of opinion, and warmth of debate, followed this struggle for humiliated eminence.

Mr. Drudge had obtained admission to the club, on the ground of ill-treatment from his publisher; and he introduced me as a stranger and passing visitor, so that I enjoyed means to become minutely acquainted with the proceedings and records of this curious society. I was allowed to turn over the books, and make what notes I pleased; accordingly I pushed my researches so far back as the year 1829, when the association was first formed; and a few of my notes I now transmit for the reader.

Lord Flute appeared one of the oldest members. His case was this: a great personage took a fancy to his face, because he was heard to say, it contained more provocations for mirth than the brains of most men; and because, though not witty himself, Lord Flute could "be the cause of wit in others." But the nobleman held his place at court and board, only on the condition of his never presuming to *say* a good thing; enough that he looked it; so that whenever conversation grew brilliant, it became his duty to hold his tongue, and depend on his face. This rule he for some time observed; until one evening, when he had quaffed rather freely, his lordship let a bad pun. Instantly the countenance of the great personage became disturbed; looks of horror were interchanged with the circle around him; and at last, in obedience to a signal, two athletic attendants conducted Lord Flute to his carriage. It was admitted bad usage.

Sir C. Blackbird became an object of the club almost under similar circumstances. The same great personage retained him as the best whistler of his day; but the terms on which he kept his place were, if possible, more severe

than those imposed on Lord Flute. As whistling was his sole charm, he was never permitted to utter any other sound. It was stipulated that he should only bow when he entered or left the presence, or whenever any whistling request was made to him at table. Human nature could not long comply with these conditions; and the moment he broke through them, though it was but by articulating a few simple words, Sir C. was banished, with the usual sentence of lasting disgrace.

I shall notice more briefly the other cases I think of consequence to the present world, and which, according to vote, were approved or rejected; though I must add, that I cannot, myself, well understand the arbitrary way in which, now and then, the club seems to have varied its good or bad opinion of the merits of applicants.

In the summer of 1829, Mr. Southey petitioned on the score of The Vision of Judgment—admitted.

Same year a gentleman (of the press), suffering much from the Times—nonsuited.

Captain B. of the 10th, applied late in the winter of the same year also—no vacancy; and advised to try another club.

Before this, Mr. Goulburn, for not pleasing any body with his new Irish tithe-bill—admitted.

A nasty little fellow who, during the Queen's trial, had written lampoons upon, and made caricatures of her Majesty and Bergami, but could never since get a shilling of his expenses from government—rejected; and referred to Bergami.

A half-pay captain, who proved that several lost battles in which he shared, might been won, but who never rose to a majority during a long service—admitted.

A dramatic poet, who, as Gil Blas relates of another, "had composed, in his time, one hundred thousand verses, which never brought him in four-pence," petitioned, and was at first generally supported, until in evidence of ill-used talent, one of his pieces was attempted to be read, and then he was negatived by acclamation.

A poet at large, whose publisher could never get rid of more than the presentation copies, sent in with his petition four volumes of his poems, and was also rejected instanter.

Liston, on account of having been thought very little of on the Dublin boards—admitted.

Captain Manby, who once went with Captain Franklin to the North Pole, to prove his harpoon-gun, but who could never strike a whale with it—admitted; and this after the registered vote, "had the mark been large enough, no doubt of his success."

William Cobbett, for failure in his prophesies, admitted; and this comment, "singular ill-treatment, when the whole world leagued to bring about the contrary of all he foretold them."

Henry Hunt, on account of failure in his roasted-corn;

The authors of the velocipede and kaleidoscope, in consideration of their failures; and many staunch patriots—admitted.

Quorums of the Bible Society, who did not succeed in converting the Irish parish-priests—admitted.

Some hundred ladies, matrons and spinsters, who were written out of bread by the author of Waverley—admitted as honorary members.

Mr. Coleridge, poet and metaphysician, and Mr. Wordsworth, poet and stamp-distributor, because not two out of ten even affected to understand them for two pages together—cordially admitted.

Prince Hohenlohe, on account of the incredulity of the people of this country; Louis XVIII. because every body laughed at his book; and the Duke of Wellington, because he was not allowed to continue the use of the bayonet in Ireland—all admitted by proxy.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

" What I am going to say to thee is upon the nature of women, and of love-making to them."

Letter of Walter Shandy to Capt. Shandy.

I GOT into love in futurity. The fact was of itself no ways remarkable, inasmuch as I had had by heart, through all tenses of my life, the indicative mood of *amo:* but it deserves to be recorded on account of my having proved, for the first time, successful as well as enamoured. And here a little explanation seems necessary.

At seventeen I felt my primitive passion. It was raised by a widow, with only six children, and only double my own age, and in every other respect an object for juvenile admiration. I sighed at a distance for many months, too timid and respectful to approach the lady's ear, till, at last, a good opportunity occurring, and one, I have since thought, half-created by my widow herself,—I mumbled forth the declaratory

words; at which her face assumed a mirthful expression, her eye measured me from head to foot, and in the end she burst out into great laughter. The next week I read in the newspapers, her marriage with a half-pay Highland officer, mostly remarkable for his Herculean proportions.

In about seven months after, I burned for an exquisite young creature, one or two years younger than I was; but finding that the novelty of feeling herself a woman, made her ambitious of doing mischief on the hearts of full-grown men, alone, and that I, as a minor, was consequently flouted, I walked home to scribble a consolatory sonnet, and, if possible, forget her.

These two failures determined me to await the legal confirmation of manhood, ere I again should fall in love. So, I went little into society until I was twenty-one; meantime, however, the adroit housemaid I have before mentioned nearly tempted me to forget myself. But I escaped her; and on the evening of my coming of age, surrendered my heart to a most engaging lady, my equal in years, at least, highly accomplished, and still most anxious to cultivate every elegant and pretty acquirement. As

I read new books, and drew a little, and particularly as I had a literary correspondent in London, who, every month, sent me six pages of tolerable gossip, my humble attentions seemed rather agreeable to my mistress; but I at length discovered that my sketches, my new books, and copies of my letters, were only borrowed for the purpose of shewing herself off to a young gentleman and his mother, her superiors in the world, but with whom the lady appeared bent on finishing her *acquirements*.

Once after this, I thought I was either beloved, or for some good reasons, acceptable in the eyes of a fourth mistress; indeed her cousin gave me to understand so much; but when, in the most prompt manner, I thought to take advantage of the hint, all the family seemed affronted that I should calculate on so sudden a victory, and I was rejected by proxy, the lady herself saying no and yes within ten minutes. I suspect they reckoned on my duteous perseverance, and might have relented in a few months; but I was either too inexperienced, or too straight-forward to come into their arrangements.

At eight and twenty, mortified and disgusted

with the artificial manners of accomplished misses, I resolved upon falling in love with the beauty and simplicity of some humbler maiden; and very soon became fascinated to my taste and my heart's content. I never beheld a more blooming, artless-looking, delightful creature. Along with every thing else, she went regularly to the parish-church, and read her bible every Sunday evening. And she loved me at first sight!—Elysium upon Elysium!—Some unavoidable delay occurred on my part for a union that she, in the strength of her simplicity, was not over bashful to urge; and three months afterwards she became an unwedded mother: I had loved her but five.

Hitherto beauty had been my aim in all my courtships; for though beauty fades in time, I argued that it was beauty while it lasted; and that a handsome woman, grown ugly, was as good as an ugly woman, any day. But now, by some perverse course of mortified reasoning, I began to dislike handsome faces and fawn-like shapes; frivolity, vanity, deceit, or vice, seemed to my soured spirit inseparable from them: and I vowed to get fond of the beauties of the mind, without the slightest care for the frail case that

inclosed it. And as if fully to flatter my ambition, and soothe my very soul, the catering deity next flung me prostrate before a young person, who, without any silver veil to make a mystery of it, had a visage that might rival all we have fancied of Mokanna's. In penning verses to my last love, the fruit and flower gardens supplied, as usual, tropes and illustration; hyacinthine locks; eyes, slow or violet; cheeks of peach skin or damask rose, and her lips a split cherry; but now, if my lady's eyes resembled any flower, it was a *wall*-flower; if any fruit, it was not *a pair*;—and, alas! the kitchen-garden gave the rest; mouth rather *caret*, and her nose somewhat *reddish*, but more of a *turn-up*. Without further details, however, I shall only add, that notwithstanding all these so much desired attractions, I soon found cause to forswear my beauty-in-spite-of-herself.

For the second time, I fixed my regards on a budding goddess; philosophically calculating, that if I could succeed in winning a very young wife, I might, as the saying is, mould her to my liking, and so get recompensed for all my disappointments. In this view, the object I now selected was scarce fifteen, and otherwise, I

thought, quite to my purpose. I was certain that, because an only and spoiled child, her education had been fortunately neglected; indeed, I knew she could spell and write only very indifferently; and in her, altogether, there seemed to me a good unreclaimed soil, that I might cultivate till I was weary. Yes, I said, this fair young tendril I shall certainly turn to my will; and so I began the task; but it proved that the lady, tendril as she was, would turn no way but at her own will; that though ignorant of every thing, she thought herself too old to learn; and, that instead of receiving my instructions, she absolutely rejected me for my deficiencies.

I was now almost forty; and tired of a fruitless pursuit that had engaged more than half my life, sometimes indignant with all womankind, that none of them would respect my pretensions, and sometimes despising myself for not possessing any, I lay by several years, endeavouring to argue my mind into a high opinion of the single state. But out of this lethargy an eighth mistress, and I should add, my last in this generation, succeeded in rousing me. I believe Julia possessed, after all, my most serious

love; and as I consider her the most important object of my early pursuits, the world will, perhaps, feel some interest in looking at her portrait.

Julia was personally attractive. Her face and figure, without any claims to be called beautiful, were fully entitled to the epithets fine and commanding.

Her mind was disposed by nature for the advantageous reception of the most liberal and useful ideas; her heart possessed all the impulses to amiability.

Being attractive, Julia, in course, "had the gift to know it." This could have done little harm, if there had been implanted in her youthful breast a corrective consciousness. But, unfortunately, the plain and wide distinction between mere accomplishments and true acquirements, was never pointed out to her view; no friendly tongue was near to whisper her, that beauty which comes by chance; unearned by exertion; unsought for, nay, unwilled; although it may command involuntary praise, ought to excite no sincere respect for its possessor; while, on the contrary, a cultivated mind and chastened feeling, imperatively call on us to

revere the person whose property they are, because we know them to be the result of "persevering and well-directed industry."

It is conceded that vanity forms a portion of the good and bad of every individual: the plainest man or woman possesses it in common with the most attractive. That Julia inherited so dangerous a quality, was not, therefore, her fault as a handsome woman, but her misfortune as a human being. But if not her fault, it was her still greater misfortune, that she possessed within herself no antidote to this bane of every thing simple and dignified. It was Julia's greatest misfortune, that her mind was left unsupplied with perhaps the best check to vanity, —taste; and her heart a passive prey to that mind.

The consequences naturally followed, and easily established themselves.

So far as regarded her acquirements, every thing that could add a grace to person, a fascination to feature, or a meretricious charm to manner, was cultivated with anxiety, if not with method; while all that could confer soundness of thought, or tact of feeling, was, rather in ignorance than intent, neglected.

And in the attainment of only exterior charms; Julia went wrong. Even here, taste would have been indispensable for choice and arrangement: Julia possessed it not; and, with vanity alone for her prompter, she selected the most gaudy accomplishments, put them on in a heap, and wore them in a flutter.

To become irresistible, she had just discernment enough to perceive that a blandness of manner was necessary; but in the cultivation of it, she was only a twaddling or mincing imitator; no originality of taste or feeling, in herself, gave cadence to her words, or easiness to her motions; and Julia mistook the surface and showy manner for the real feminine blandishment.

Hence her fine language was, to any well-toned ear, rather in the Mrs. Malaprop or "Ercles' vein;" hence her modulations seemed borrowed from the tuning-key; hence did she often confound the simplicity of the lady with the burst of the tragedy-queen.

Yet Julia *could* be natural. There was as much difference between Julia at an evening fire-side, and Julia in a drawing-room, or receiving the afternoon visit of "somebody," as

there is between a fine woman in Grecian drapery, and the same woman in Chinese petticoats, or in Queen Anne's ruffs, hoops, and stomacher.

In the former situation she used to speak plain, and sit gracefully, and altogether charm me; in the latter she used to sicken, and sometimes insult me. Her "*how d'do Mr.* ——" when in the face of others Julia would be magnificent; the air of her head, her voice, and her whole manner, was, in the first place, but a studied effect got up for the occasion, of which the highest praise might be, that it was like nature, but of which the well-earned censure must be, that it was not nature; and, in the second place, I felt it as one of those gratuitous outrages on private and understood feeling, that of all human creatures, a clergyman, a very old gentleman, or a woman, cannot without meanness hazard, because, though age, profession, or sex, may be the shield to ward off a freedom, it should never be the sword to inflict one.

We were to be married, however. But, fortunately or unfortunately, a gay party attended us to church, and Julia and I actually quarrelled and parted at the altar, about the most

eminent method of putting on the ring. I offered it in my own way; she crooked her finger, and whispered me, rather in a dictatorial tone, to do it in another way; and the result was that I never did it in any way.

But no doubt all these disappointments were providentially meant to leave me free for the highly honorable and gratifying connexion I at length formed with my present—indeed, I should rather say, my future good lady. Eight months altogether I lived in futurity; and within the very first month became a husband; my wife's people inviting me to reside in their house. The succeeding three months proved one uninterrupted honey-moon. Never was man more happy.

In the cruel separation that has followed, some peculiar reflections, and a few hopes, are my only solace. Whether or not we can ever meet again, I have the pleasure to know, that some weeks before I lost sight of my lady, she was situated "as women wish to be who love their lords;" and, her health and constitution being excellent, I may thus reckon on the proud as well as novel blessing of a son, (I hope, in preference to a daughter, but God's will for it,) walking about,

alive, among the people of two hundred years to come, and bearing my name, and calling me father. This is, at least, a sure and unparalleled kind of immortality. It has been declared that every man owes children to posterity; I have, more circumstantially and literally than any man before me, liquidated the debt; perhaps it may be said, only partially, however; but this remains to be proved; and I may hint that at the male side of our family, there ran, time out of mind, a remarkable taste, if not facility for twins; so that the parish-registers of 2024 can alone and ultimately decide the question.

Then in the exciting and delightful puzzle of how all this has happened, or is to happen, I love to ask myself whether I have achieved a past, a present, or a future honor; or one, in a breath, past, present, and future. While I pine under absence, it is curious as well as cheering to reflect, that my lady is free from any such trouble on my account; and to remain so for a reasonable time. Nor can I entertain the least doubt of her constancy during that period; and thus, I flatter myself, no man was ever more free from all cause of jealousy, or

ever stood such a chance of long and unalterable attachment from the sex.

It is still more curious to me, to turn over in my mind the unusual space of time my good lady must continue in the family-way. Or I suddenly start, and wonder where is she at all, with the precious burden committed to her charge? The whole affair then seems to me like a stolen marriage between myself and the creature of another world, who shortly after the ceremony, flitted back into her eternal space, or burst, as a bubble on the air; and I conclude by assuming that the "Loves of the Angels" were nothing to it.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"Zounds I was never so bethumped with words."
King John.

"Yes! there are hearts, prophetic hope may trust,
That slumber yet in uncreated dust,

Ordained to light with intellectual day
The mazy *wheels*"—— *Pleasures of Hope.*

My father-in-law was one of the most famous and popular metaphysicians of his age, by name Dr. Splitstraw. While living in his house, I naturally spoke at much length to him, particularly as his studies were of my own favourite kind; but he exceedingly disturbed me with a set of doctrines, not merely new, but opposite to any I had been able to collect from the system I was educated in. Scarcely could I open my mouth, but he had at me with a contradiction. He strove to shew, in contempt of Locke, that we *were* born with innate ideas, not absolutely formed perhaps, yet strong, in embryo,

and able to shoot out of themselves, as an infant cuts his eye-teeth, without any exterior assistance or impulse. The human mind was *not*, according to Dr. Splitstraw, originally a blank sheet of paper; it only seemed so; but thoughts were written on it in secret-ink, as it were, that but required the warmth of years to make them come forth and be legible. Then, "Whether is the species contained in the genus, or the genus in the species?" he asked me.

"The genus in the species, surely," said I, and I proceeded with something of the allowed proof, "for man, dog, horse, are, each of them, a different species of the genus animal; but they are also, and separately, complete and entire animals; hence the genus animal is whole and entire in each one of its species."

"Or thus," said Dr. Splitstraw, "one, two, and three Lord Mayors are patriots; each a different species of the genus patriot; but they are also, and separately, complete and entire patriots; hence the genus patriot is whole and entire in each one of the three Lord Mayors."

Not noticing his sneer, I continued. "Again. The affirmative term of a proposition proclaims that a subject *has* or possesses its attribute.

The general import of the universal copula *is*, implies possession. In the proposition, 'a horse is an animal;' *horse* is the subject, animal the predicate. But the subject contains its predicate; therefore *horse* contains *animal;* and *horse* is species, and animal is genus; and therefore, again the species contains the genus."

"We say that the subject *has* or contains its predicate, only in a figurative sense, sir," said the Doctor; "strictly and obviously the attribute is an accident to its subject; as the shape of a thing is no part of a thing; or as round or square is no component part of a table; or a man's cane, coat, or snuff-box, belongs to him; any one of them is his property; he *has*, he possesses them; but he does not contain them; they are not in him."

"Nor could they, unless he was devilishly hungry," observed Mr. Drudge, who happened to be present. Dr. Splitstraw went on.

"Or if the animal be fully contained in the *horse;* if, as old Harris hath it, the animal be shut up 'whole and entire' in the horse; we can understand nothing by the words, but that our whole ideas of animal are so shut up. And if so, no part of our ideas of an animal can be

found *out of* the horse; no part of them can be found in a *cow* for instance, and from this it follows, that a horse is an animal, but that a cow is not.

"Supposing us to assert, however, that the cow *is* an animal, and so on of a cormorant, an alderman, &c. until we say the same of a hundred species, it would also follow that a *whole* idea of one thing can be shut up in twenty different things, at one and the same time. For if the *whole idea* of animal be contained in the horse, it is also contained in the cow, the cormorant, the alderman, &c.; so that we should have twenty *wholes*, yet but one whole; each a separate whole, and all but one whole. 1 is 1, and 1 is 20; 20 are 20, and 20 *is* 1. Riddle-me-ree!

"Further. As at our pleasure, we may convert a species into a genus, and thus consider *man* as the genus of many species of men; I am entitled to lay down this proposition, (as a parallel to your last one) 'a dandy is a man;' and also entitled to prove it in the same way you proved yours; for example: *Dandy* is the subject, and *man* the attribute; the subject contains its attribute; and therefore, and also, because

dandy is the species, and *man* the genus, dandy contains man! who would believe you?"

But if these and a hundred other novelties in speculative philosophy occasioned me any shock, my utter amazement was to be yet excited by a view of the progress and inventions of physical science. Indeed I go into details, for which it is necessary I should advance this particular warning.

Early on the day succeeding the conversation I have last repeated, I called by appointment on Mr. Drudge, who had promised to introduce me to Mr. Angle, one of the most eminent experimentalists. As we took our way to this gentleman's residence, which was in the country, I was doomed to be made acquainted, by anticipation, with his prowess. In one of the main streets, a monstrous vehicle, undrawn by horses, and otherwise seemingly unimpelled, and yet loaded with inside and outside passengers, whisked past me at a fearful rate, while two more came trundling down the street in an opposite direction.

"Aha!" exclaimed Mr. Drudge, "I see old Angle has been successful. This was to be the first day for adopting, in the post-office depart-

ment, his new self-impelling coaches, and there they go in fine style. No doubt they must be universally imitated, and so an end to the vassalage, indeed to the race of horses."

"Then we can no longer say," I remarked,

"Eheu! quantus equis, quantus adest viris
Sudor!"

"You are aware," Mr. Drudge went on, that, long since, we put an end to human labour; that fields are mowed and reaped, roads and canals cut, trees felled and planted, streets paved, and stones broken, by competent machinery. Nay, I wear the best pair of boots and breeches I ever wore, that have been stitched without the aid of human finger."

"But how many thousands of our fellow-creatures must curse your improvements;" said I.

"I don't know that," resumed Mr. Drudge; "the persons who seem most inconvenienced and angry at this innovation, are the members of the four-in-hand club; though it is thought a majority of them will, sooner than remain in a state of idleness, learn to attend and keep in order the machinery of our self-driving coaches; and you know any of them can still sit behind and blow the horn."

I stared, but my wonder was only half-roused. As we approached a cross-way in the street, a besom that had hitherto lain quiet against the wall, bounced out of its place, and began and kept sweeping with so much earnestness, that the way was perfectly clear in a minute: then, having finished, it resumed its station at the wall.

"That," said Mr. Drudge, observing my amazement, "is another blessing, for which we are indebted to the advance of science. By its agency, the last relics of beggars, that used to infest our streets, in the shape of black men with one leg, or sailors with one arm, are entirely got rid of. As we go along you shall see other pretty instances of our mental progress. Barrel-organ and hurdy-gurdy vagrants of all kinds and nations are in the same way removed. You know their grinding music was, in the old time, their sole pretext for idleness; and we now supply self-playing hurdy-gurdies, barrel-organs, and pandean-pipes to the multitude, gratis. See there!"

And Mr. Drudge assuredly pointed to a hurdy-gurdy that, unassisted by human hands, struck up a waltz, in good measure, as we approached.

"Angle," continued my friend, "is at present engaged in a most important investigation. A mountain lately exploded and displaced itself in the east, and under its base, were discovered fragments of bones, some of which are obviously human. As obviously, they must have been deposited there before the mountain rested on them, and now the question is to ascertain how all that happened, together with the age of the fragments themselves. Serious changes in serious opinions must follow the result."

"Has nothing yet transpired?" I asked.

"In your ear, yes," Mr. Drudge whispered, "I believe, that is, I apprehend, it will turn out as the most likely presumption, that these little scraps, (one in particular, which it can scarce be doubted is a splinter off a man's or woman's thigh-bone,) are older than your Moses had an idea of; but here is Angle's house."

CHAPTER XXX

" I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes—" *Puck.*

" He considered virtues and vices as certain *habits* that proceed from the natural formation and structure of parts of the body." *Martinus.*

Mr. Drudge promised truly for the acquirements of his venerable friend. He spoke to us with ease and vivacity in answer to every question; and the crowd of new inventions by himself or others that successively engaged Mr. Angle's discussion, filled me with mute astonishment. I cannot propose to follow him half way, but among other matters, he introduced his speculations on a grand army of automeda, with an automedon general at its head, by which a battle could be fought and won, as well as if by animate soldiers and their commanders. Philanthropy was ever the best motive to scientific studies, he observed; and he looked for final

success in this undertaking with more than ordinary anxiety, in consideration of the torrents of human blood to be saved by it: and both gentlemen further thought such a mode of warfare suited to the then passive system of winning battles, which consisted of little more than building up a thick human wall against an offensive enemy.

"I have also since been thinking of you and your brethren, Mr. Drudge," said the philosopher. "My review-press is quite ready for use, and here," producing a proof sheet, "is a review originally composed at it by our two little automeda, this morning before breakfast. If we can manage to keep it close, it may help, considerably, you gentlemen periodicals."

"Was the book before them?" asked Mr. Drudge, laughing.

"No," Mr. Angle replied, gravely; "I took it on trust from your index—isn't it right?"

"Oh, quite right,—and it saves me an hour this evening," said Mr. Drudge, putting the review in his pocket. "Have you used your great telescope since the last improvements?"

"No," Mr. Angle replied; "but if you and your foreign friend favour me with your com-

pany till night, we shall try it from my observatory in the garden. The workmen are at present engaged in raising it on the platform."

"I suppose you make little doubt of being able to ascertain their costume and stature, now?" resumed the author.

"Whom do you speak of in this manner?" I asked.

"Of our friends in the next primary, only," said Mr. Drudge, very coolly. "At the last observation we saw them walking about with their wives and children, and employed in a variety of work. What do you think of Longshot's Bomb-Express, Mr. Angle?"

"Why I do think he may, after all, despatch the mails to France and Holyhead by it. The principal obstacle seems to be a cylinder, by way of envelope, that will not burst in the explosion. But that, it strikes me, is no very difficult matter."

"And pray how is your inmate, Mr. Klapptrapp?"

But not to continue conversation at too much length I will explain.

They spoke of a gentleman who had invented a new and approved science of moral physio-

gnomy, deduced from Messrs. Spurzheim and Gall; and deduced I may in every sense say; for leaving them in possession of the head, it seized on the feet; thus, perhaps, pushing the matter to extremities. Mr. Klapptrapp made the cover of leather usually worn by these members, equivalent to the integument of the cranium, in Mr. Gall's system; and hence his science derived its name of Ocreology. Prior, I believe, has ingeniously set to work, in his smart poem of Alma Mater, to discover the residence of thought in the human machine; and, if I mistake not, traced it indifferently to the limbs. Such, at least, was the floating recollection in my mind, that, at the first mention of Mr. Klapptrapp's theory, made me think something might come of it.

Mr. K.'s attention was first seized by observing that after a man has worn a boot or shoe for a considerable time, his feet give it a particular set, and also particular markings, that raise and fix the leather at certain points of the insteps and toes, into greater or smaller convexities: these, in the end, become confirmed on the outward surface; so that when the shoe or boot is even thrown away, or cast aside for

ever, they keep their places and shapes. The varieties of bumps thus insured to boots and shoes were, he next observed, as endless as the varieties of human talent and general character; and here, and at once, was a coincidence too remarkable not to be curiously analyzed.

So, Mr. Klapptrapp became industrious; and in the very infancy of his inquiries, ascertained the strong-marked difference between the bumps conformed on the boot of a very vulgar and brutal man, and that of a very refined and amiable man. No one, he well remarked, can have been without noticing the horrid conformations acquired by the boots of a huge waggoner or Smithfield badge-man, who from constant use of same has fully impressed them with the knuckles and twistings of his broad, bullock-like, splay-foot. Only hang up by their side a pair of genteel old boots, such as may have been worn, even to the welt, by a scholar or philanthropist, and can you not instantly vouch the exact kind of intellect and heart that once put in motion the different limbs to which both were once appended?

This was the foundation of Mr. Klapptrapp's system. He followed it up with a zeal, a per-

spicuity and minuteness I cannot pretend to detail; first contrasting general differences, and then, his eye and intellect becoming quicker by practice, at last establishing the nicest subdivisions and distinctions; so that bring him a pair of cast off shoes or boots he had never before seen, and he told you, within a bump, of the wearer's talent and morality.

When Mr. Angle introduced me into his study, we carried with us a pair of shoes that had been left behind by a man recently hanged for a shocking murder; and the moment Mr. K. laid his eyes on them, he proclaimed their sanguinary conformation. In this he was fully warranted by the appearance of the organ of destruction, which, as I recollect, is formed by an unusual swell of the outward knuckle of the great toe, leaving a correspondent knob on the outside of the shoe or boot; and which, in this instance, peculiarly verified its nature by having burst through the leather on or about the night when the homicide committed his bloody act.

We found the philosopher surrounded by rows over rows of old boots and shoes of every possible class; and I listened with much interest and deference to his lecture of some hours, upon the virtues or vices, genius or stupidity,

of those by whom they had once been worn. There was the last pair of Waterloos that John Thurtell had doffed, authenticated by certificates under the hand of each collector of curiosities who had possessed them, from Lavender or Ruthven down to Dr. Klapptrapp; and the benevolent and cautious, and heroic cut-throat and brain-pounder came in for his future as well as present vindication. By felicitous chances other shoes and boots of other remarkable characters of this day, had been snatched from oblivion: but while all proclaimed the admitted and general excellence of the individuals they professed to illustrate, they also suggested curious differences, in minute points, indeed, between the real and self-asserted characters of some of those persons. Lord Byron's boot, for instance, wanted the organ of amativeness; hinting that notwithstanding all a man may rhyme about the passion, he need not, as a consequence, ever feel it; or, the *vice versâ*, that as Shakspeare says, one may be

——" over *boots* in love,
Altho' he never swam the Hellespont."

Neither did Mr. Hazlitt's shoe exhibit much of this organ. I was surprised to see a pair of Sir

Walter's evince almost as much Constructiveness as Ideality, and not so much Secretiveness as I had expected. Wordsworth, after all, left behind him a pair of shoes indicative of little veneration, while Time, Tune, Order, Casualty, and Locality, were jumbled together in them. Mr. Southey's had a strong bump of self-esteem; now equivalent to self-conceit; Ugo Foscolo's had no Combativeness; Coleridge's no Form; Hogg's no Wit; the author of Lacon's no Inhabitiveness; and Bowles's very little Weight and Momenta.

It will be here remarked, that Mr. Klapptrapp had unceremoniously transferred to his leathern knobs all the organic names invented by his predecessors; which, however common to both the names might be, I own I regarded as a plagiarism unworthy of his genius. Perhaps, too, without reference either to his system, or that of any other person, I once or twice thought that

"Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow,
The rest is all but leather——"

Or perhaps, when first initiated into his science, I advocated the superior claims of Phrenology over Ocreology; until, convinced by the doc-

tor's arguments, I at last agreed with him, and with the currier, who, in the school fable, is called to give his opinion on the best way to fortify a besieged town—that,

"Try what you please, there is nothing like—leather!"

Mr. Drudge was a complete convert to the system; and, rather in hopes, I think, of conciliating the doctor on a pair of his own boots he secretly sent in, composed a song in praise of Ocreology, which in the course of the evening he sang at Mr. Angle's, and of which he favoured me with a copy, as follows:

1.

You may talk of your school and your college,
You may pant for your ribbons and scars;
But without it you'll never get knowledge,
And never need go to the wars:
Tho' they dub you a doctor for ever,
Tho' you fight till you're nothing but stump,
Who dares be courageous or clever,
If he is deficient in—Bump?
Oh Bump, Bump, Bump!—
Magical, mystical Bump!—
Cut the nose from my face, but oh, never,
Never curtail me of Bump!—

2.

Why is a virgin false hearted?
A negro* for Logic unfit?
A fool and his money soon parted?
And no critic at all in the pit?
Why can't a member make speeches?
An alderman play at hop-jump?
Why *should* a man's wife wear the breeches?
All are deficient in—Bump!—
Oh Bump, Bump, Bump!—
Magnified, mystified Bump!
I ask not stars, laurels, or riches,
But cover me over with—Bump!

Dr. Klapptrapp, though not a native of England, was, in consequence of skilful playing on the organs, highly considered in the country; a member of, I know not how many societies; and he wrote his sign-manual, with I cannot tell how many *capital* puffs to its tail.

* See Lawrence's Lectures.

CHAPTER XXXI.

" A breath may make them as a breath has made."

GOLDSMITH.

" You wear out a wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fosset-seller; and then adjourn the controversy of three-pence to a second day of audience."

Coriolanus.

" To say the truth, these lawyers and solicitors are but so many smoke-merchants, sellers of wind, and troublers of the public peace."

QUEVEDO. *Second Vision of Death and her Empire.*

LEAVING worthy Mr. Angle to prosecute his studies for a few hours, or else engage himself in looking after our comforts at the dinner and evening tea he had promised us, Mr. Drudge and I sauntered through the town, bent on no settled object, but willing to be amused or instructed by any thing that might chance.

As a number of private carriages flashed past us, emblazoned with arms and mottoes, that, notwithstanding my dabbling in heraldry, were

strange to me, I became informed by answers my friend made to my inquiries, that incredible changes had taken place in the heraldic world. New titles and new families abounded; and old ones that I had habitually regarded with reverence, Mr. Drudge was wholly ignorant of.

I stept into the office of the herald-at-arms, and for a proper fee, further satisfied myself in this particular. The descendants of a little tinker, whose name I had a thousand times read on a sign near St. Dunstan's, were now lords and ladies, with a marquess at their head. City men, and Rooks, had clutched the broad lands of many an old Norman aristocrat; and different causes, of which the spirit of these Revelations will not admit the mention, had swept away the very names of others. Then the prime minister of England was grandson of an Irish pig-broker, and the keeper of the seals had resulted from a scrivener's apprentice. This however, I had little objection to.

Almost the only thing I found completely unaltered by time, or the progress of society, was—law. I visited the courts, and beheld the same wigs and gowns, the same briefs and bags, and the same pervading, and, one would think,

hereditary physiognomy that from childhood I had been accustomed to: thin, white faces, with thin noses; angular faces, with snub noses, and screwed-up mouths; and round, bronze, bull-dog faces, with lumps for noses, chasms for mouths, and specks of fiery light for eyes; and here, I think, I have enumerated the three characters of heads, that, go where you will, live where you will, and when you will, and as long as you will, make up the professional and family features of all gentlemen of the long-robe.

Cases proceeded, and I heard the same respectable prosing, the same gentlemanly cant, and the same grave quibbling of two hundred years before. Nothing was apparently altered; not even to a curl, or the hair of a curl of the judges' wigs, who sat on the bench as if they *had been* there for a century, and *were to be* there for another century.

In a little time I began to think that, in spirit and essence the practice continued equally unchanged and unchangeable. I remember a few cases.

A respectable publisher was prosecuted *ex officio*, for putting out a work of genius, which, the pious attorney-general assumed, struck at

the religion of the land. I attended the trial; the publisher was fined and imprisoned, and the book so far suppressed. In a few days appeared a sixpenny edition of it, which every one in every rank purchased, and application was made to the Lord Chancellor for leave to put on his trial the sixpenny publisher also; but, nay, said his lordship, this man has only injured the first publisher whom I cannot protect; and although we have punished the first for circulating only a few copies, still let the second circulate as many as he will: I, an equity judge, sworn to render to the country plain justice and common sense, I cannot interfere.

Same day a man was tried in one of the criminal courts, for seizing upon the apparatus of a notorious forger who had been hanged the week before, and with the same tools and materials his predecessor had used, sending out a deluge of bad money; but on the Lord Chancellor's argument this fellow was acquitted, and sent home to multiply his counters, and thrive.

Also a certain man, who had just been found guilty of assaulting another, was himself knocked down by a third as he stood in the dock; no remedy.

Cases of a different kind interested me. A. saw B. pick a pocket, and afterwards called him a rascal in the presence of others, for doing so. B. prosecuted A. for defamation of character. A. proved the act of pocket-picking against B., by the mouth of others; but the judge charged the jury to find heavy damages against A.; because, whether he told truth or not, B. might be injured in his business by the assertion.

In another case, C. brought an action against D. for defamatory language also; in fact, D. had to twenty others accused C. of robbing and cheating him. C. established the slander to the full satisfaction of judge and jury; but not being a man in trade or business, nor able to demonstrate that on account of the defamation he had lost *credit or customers*, a verdict was found for D., and C. was obliged to pay costs on both sides.

A father had an only child, a daughter, who was fair, good, and dutiful. An accomplished seducer paid her unwearied attentions, won her heart, and under the veil of a mock-marriage, destroyed her. The broken-hearted parent could take satisfaction on the seducer only in the form of an action to recover, in pounds,

shillings, and pence, "the value" of the inestimable treasure he had lost, and after a solemn hearing of the case, a jury of fathers and husbands awarded him 97*l.* 11*s.* 5¼*d.*, "for the services of his daughter."

Next case. A born idiot, nominally in possession of a real property, willed it away to a designing person, totally unconnected with his family. The heir-at-law sought to break the will on the grounds of well-known idiotism, and, in course, legal incompetency in the testator. He shewed, as plaintiff, one of the most monstrous cases of downright idiocracy that ever was made out; he proved that the testator, though the son of a gentleman, could not write his own name; (indeed the will proved this, for it was validated by a + instead of a signature:) that he had, from his childhood up, been running fool to a score regiments; that he dressed like a groom, cleaned the knives in his own house, slavered at the mouth, and was in the habit of shewing such estimation of property as to give away an old guinea, because it was small, and did not shine, for a new penny, because it was large, and as bright as day; and he once exchanged a thorough-bred hunter for

a fine new shovel. The jury were of a mind that such a man should not be allowed to dispose at pleasure of several thousands a-year; the plaintiff's case was not rebutted; and all seemed well for him, his children, and his heirs for ever, until, at last, the defendant proved, that once on a time the fool "told who his parents were," and from another witness, got the opinion that he had "some glimmering of reason;" and thereupon the judge advised the jury that, by law, "a man is *not* an idiot, who hath *any* glimmering of reason, so that he can tell his parents, his age, or the like common matters,"* and the strange possessor was instantly confirmed in his title, and the plaintiff sent home to starve.

The next. An attorney had taken up, for a poor man, the recovery of a large estate. The suit was for twenty-one years in law and chancery; but at last the poor man got a verdict, and nominal possession of what always had been his. Almost immediately, however, the attorney who had recovered for him, seized on the estate for his own law costs; it was put up to sale, and knocked down to the attorney himself for a

* Blackstone.

third of its value; the purchase-money did not cover above half the costs, and the poor man was, in his old age, thrust into prison for the balance.

All these cases I had witnessed before the day on which, as I have stated, Mr. Drudge and myself left Mr. Angle's house to amuse ourselves through town. Then, however, turning with him into the law-courts, I heard another in King's Bench, that more than any interested me.

A trial, upon an issue from chancery, came on before a special jury. It was a case of pedigree, in which the plaintiff sought to prove himself heir to a certain estate; and no sooner were the proofs entered into than I recognized him as lineal descendant of an old college chum, who about the year 1817 had been engaged in the identical suit for the identical property; had ruined himself with it, after which he cut his throat; and had received it from his great grandfather, who lost, in the very first trial, a respectable property in hand, and who was subsequently hanged for attempting the life of the plaintiff's attorney.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Audax Iapeti genus
Ignem fraude mala gentibus intulit;

Expertus vacuum Dædalus aëra
Pennis non homini datis;
Perrupit Acheronta Herculeus labor;
Nil mortalibus arduum est.
Cœlum ipsum petimus stultitia, neque
Per nostrum patimur scelus
Iracunda Jovem ponere fulmina."

ODES OF HORACE.

In the evening, after dinner, Mr. Drudge and I accompanied Mr. Angle to his observatory, to try his telescope, with its new arrangements. Talk of Herschel's!—Bah! it was an opera-quiz in comparison. The object glass measured ten feet in diameter; and I think it might be about the length of the monument, if you suppose the jet-out at the top removed from the latter. And there it lay, diagonally to the earth, and taking ominous aim at the stars,

like a giant's culverin, levelled for their destruction.

The evening was quite favourable to our views; a clear, blue sky, and the mob of stars trying which should wink merriest. Every thing promised well; when just as Mr. Angle had brought his monstrous engine to bear, and just as I had been invited to look into the domestic concerns of Jupiter, which he averred were now fully cognizable, part of the platform that supported one of the uprights, that in turn supported the telescope, suddenly gave way, and down came the whole ponderous apparatus, shivering its own lens to pieces, and rocking the solid bulwark on which we stood.

I looked for an immediate shew of vexation on the part of Mr. Angle; but after standing a moment silent, he only said, somewhat in imitation of the great Sir Isaac, when Shock had worried and flittered his invaluable manuscripts, "Ah, careless builder, careless builder! thou little knowest the injury thou hast done!"

My attention was here absorbed by loud explosions of—as I at first thought—thunder in the air; but after a minute's lapse, the volleys were accompanied or followed by tremendous

bursts of shouting, and all kind of human clamour; the whole re-echoing at a distance through the concave over our heads. Surprised and terrified to the utmost, my teeth chattered, and my knees smote each other; for I could suppose nothing less than that hell was loose, and that an infernal host had broken forth to wage, once more, a vain though dreadful warfare with the archangel.

My eyes mechanically fixed on Mr. Angle and Mr. Drudge, who, to my increased consternation, stood, very coolly, *auribus erectis*, or, in more familiar phrase, cocking their ears, and glancing upward, as if only interested to a pleasant degree. I *could* not speak, and, for some time, my friends did not.

At length—"A rencontre of the hostile cruizers," observed Mr. Angle.

"Or, perhaps, a general engagement between the fleets," quoth the author.

"Perhaps," Mr. Angle resumed;—"the increasing discharge of artillery makes it likely."

"In the name," said I, "of this world and the next, which last we verge on, I think,—what do you both mean? what does *it* mean?"

"Ha, ha, ha!—now he seems nervous I pro-

test," said Mr. Drudge;—"Can't you really guess it?"

I truly answered, "No."

"Then where have you been born?" asked the poet.

"Never heard a word of the discovery?"

"For the last three years, you know, I have been in the wildernesses of Egypt, cut off from all intercourse with Europe," I said, willing even at the price of a mis-statement, to keep up my character for consistency, "and England was the first civilized place I came to;—but what discovery, Mr. Drudge?—Mr. Angle, what discovery?" I said, getting more vehement as the uproar increased.

"Why, merely of the balloon-ship," said Mr. Angle, "now some three years known, and so far adapted as you see—hear, rather."

"It originated with us," said Mr. Drudge, "and we kept it to ourselves, till in great secrecy and despatch, we had embarked a fleet sufficiently manned and supplied, to establish a prior right to a respectable colony in our little satellite."

"The moon!" I exclaimed.

"The moon," said Mr. Angle, calmly,

"Meteor-stones, and spring-tides!—but go on, Mr. Angle—I'm listening to you," said I.

"Having founded our colony, we, in due course, sent notice thereof to our continental friends, who soon fitted out separate fleets, and flocked *en masse* to benefit by our example. But on the very first landing of two or three of these fleets, disputes arose about the division of territory, so that, notwithstanding several congresses at Vienna and Carlsbad, the renewed holy alliance has since gone to pieces; we, meanwhile, retaining undisturbed possession of our snug corner."

"Alexander the fifth of Russia, and Ferdinand the twelfth of Austria, are, at present, the chief belligerents," said Mr. Drudge. "It is known that two large fleets, fitted out by them, have, for some time, been on the watch for each other; intelligence of their last stations and movements was every day expected by the parachute-packet; and I suppose," continued Mr. Drudge, "these are the first reports we hear of them."

"And what says the Man o' the Moon to all this?" I asked.

"Hang him, nothing," said the author,

an old drivellen of a fellow. At first, indeed, he seemed rather surprised, and stupidly thought to oppose the new comers, with all his scythes, sickles, and pitch-forks, then engaged in the harvest; but finding himself laughed at, or worse treated, he soon bundled himself up into the centre of the country, collecting his crops and people around him."

"'Tis a pretty little planet, only very bare in timber," said Mr. Angle: "and the manners and minds of the poorer inhabitants unsettled, predatory, and, according to our scale, necessarily immoral and benighted. When I was last there, however, the prevalence of Bible societies, and the general adoption of Mr. Owen's villages in our colony, seemed to promise a speedy amelioration. I noticed one respectable and thriving place, called New-Lanark, in honour of the great founder of the system. The Bridge-Street association, too, have established an auxiliary branch there; and in other respects the moral and religious character of the colony bids fair for excellence."

"Indeed so congenial and attractive are the soil and atmosphere, that the constant emigration thither has seriously thinned the mother-

planet; we have scarcely left among us a conscientious dealer, a just judge, a handsome woman, who is not vain, a virtuous wife, an humble priest, a sincere patriot, or a disinterested friend; almost all have gone to the moon, long since," said Mr. Drudge.

"You must admit, however," said Mr. Angle, "that we got rid at the same time, of cargoes of speculators, whose absence from earth is of much general importance. I witnessed, myself, the departure of whole fleets of Sonnetteers to the Moon, 'maiden tragedy'-writers, misses in their first love, romancing old women, stage-struck boys, and authors of long-poems in blank verse, and short ones in no verse at all."

"Then you were really in the moon, Mr. Angle?" said I.

"Really and really," said the philosopher, smiling, "and what is more—often. My eldest daughter is rather well married, there, to one of our most thriving settlers, and I spend a month with them and their children, now and then. Mrs. Angle is in the moon at present."

"Why was I left ignorant of this when Miss Splitstraw gave me her hand?" said I—"I have lost the true honey-moon."

"Yes, indeed," said Mr. Drudge, "we never think of spending it here now."

"But you seem to make very light of the voyage," I resumed,—"I have been in the habit of supposing that it ought to cost one half a good life, at least."

"Phu, phu. When you once clear our thick atmosphere, and get into what has been called space, (for want of a better name) but which is filled by a fine current of subtle air, you travel at the rate of forty miles an hour; so that the whole progress through the earth's atmosphere, and all, is at the average rate of twenty-five miles an hour.

"You know the moon is only 240,000 English miles from us; multiply 24 hours by 25 miles, and the product is 600 miles a day; again multiply this by the days of thirteen calendar months, and it makes you out the 240,000 miles; and thus, you see, the voyage is comfortably performed in about thirteen months, little more than the time formerly consumed in the very early voyages to India."

"Is the volcano considerable?" I asked.

"That was all hum," said Mr. Angle. "The people were in the habit, now and then, of light-

ing tremendous fires to the sun—they are Guebirs—and so the mistake occurred."

"And, now, of these air-ships themselves, gentlemen; what is their principle, and how are they steered? have they rudder, or compass, or sails, or what substitutes, Mr. Ang—?"

CHAPTER THE LAST.

"A change came o'er the spirit of my dream."

BYRON.

BUT here our discourse was in a mixed manner interrupted. The explosions of the aerial belligerents came so near, and increased so much, that they took exclusive possession of my ears, and I was insensible to all other sounds. My friends continued speaking, I suppose, but I could only see their lips move: then was the first change. As I looked at them their faces grew sharp, and their figures indistinct, as if fading under my vision; anon they seemed to recede, shrinking and dissolving every step, and at last evanishing with their eyes fixed oddly upon me. At this moment the volleys of firing ceased, and my sense was confusedly smote, as if by a volley of loud laughter in its place, which came I thought from both my departing friends. Attendant on these circumstances, I began to

experience the old sensations about my stomach, and I was more and more sensible of a change, a fearful change.

Exactly in the places where the visages of Mr. Drudge and Mr. Angle had last appeared, there grew, somehow, two horrid caricatures of the human countenances and shape, and four round lack-lustre eyes fixed on mine, with, in the expression, a strange likeness to the parting glance bestowed on me by those gentlemen. Still I looked steadfastly, and the grotesque animals now emitted a giggling sound, which I thought a continuation also of the laugh I have described. They squatted on their hams, resting their misshapen hands on their knees, and so watched and tittered at me. In a little time two more of them appeared, and another; and more and more still, coming out in swarms like stars through the blue of an early twilight. And near me, at the right hand and at the left, and all around me, I beheld innumerable creatures of the same kind, and bearing the same disagreeable likeness to man, stretched at their length as if dead, or in a sleep as profound as death; then I closed my eyes in loathing and agony, uttering a groan; upon which a hundred

jibbering voices united in unearthly laughter; and I was warned at the same time by a rustling, as if of leaves around, that the seemingly dead portion of my company had jumped up, and were alive again. In short, coming to myself, I recollected my situation, and at once accounted for this scene.

I was reclining on my bed of foliage, just as I had lain down after my meal of miraculous earth, and a community of large monkeys had gathered about me, some mimicking, according to the audacious propensity of their nature, my recumbent posture, and others enjoying themselves at my expense. So I unlashed the cords by which I had bound myself to my forest cradle, and pulling a reputable branch, laid on with such effect, that the intruders skipped away, screaming, in all directions, and I was soon completely alone. Then I quietly descended from the tree, and at its foot returned a thanksgiving for my preservation through so long a trance.

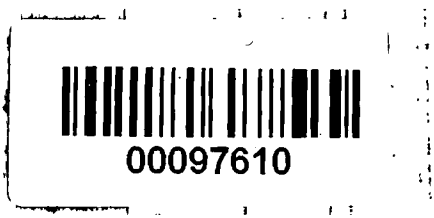
Immediately afterwards I emerged from the forest, seeking an asylum among the friendly Otomacs, and dwelling with them many days. In a space, they conducted me to the coast, and

to the habitations of civilized men, where a trading vessel gave me passage for my native country; and I arrived in England on the 18th day of December, 1823, at the hour of half past seven in the morning, to prepare, for the warning and improvement of mankind, the true revelations of my dead estate, hereby promulgated and authenticated.

The world may suppose I have imported and preserved proper quantities of the efficacious earth; and it is far from improbable that, if life and health permit, I may not, before I in reality die, make another breakfast on it, to the further enlightening of my fellow creatures; contentedly adopting, for the present, the opinion of the distinguished author of "Table Talk," that I had better have my life still to come at some future period, and so postpone my existence century after century, *ad infinitum*."

FINIS.

J. M'Creery, Tooks-Court, Chancery-Lane, London.


00097610

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 March, 2016